In modern era, people in general, and urban inhabitants in particular, encounter many distressing and unsettling circumstances to the four winds, since cities are rife with environmental and visual pollutions, growing fast and furious. Moreover, thanks to the essentials of modernity, people are losing faith to supernatural beings. As a consequence, feeling abandoned and shelterless under the oppressive weight of "being"--or as the twentieth-century author, Milan Kundera, words it, "the unbearable lightness of being", in this infinitely anarchical universe, people are craving and yearning for other sources of solace rather than the demised religion, and correspondingly religious rituals. In light of these thoughts, I for one would commend the following "stratagems" in this inescapable "battle."

Marc Twain says, "Books are for people who wish they were somewhere else." This brilliant idea--to which I subscribe as well--shows best that an efficacious aid, with which we are able to tolerate the inexorable stressful circumstances and tensions of life is a priceless promising asset called book. Reading books not only helps us to drop anxieties at least awhile, but also conducts us to a broader world, not revealed otherwise, and as the result of which manifests diverse potentials and prospects to approach the worries and concerns. Furthermore, on the condition that we are deprived or withheld of actual delights and entertainments in the stark reality of life, books provide us with utter joy and sheer diversions, even if it is illusional as a mirage.

Another invaluable course of action to cultivate the capability to cope with problems, in my perspective, is daring to attempt creating an objective handiwork whereby we could express our very individualities, and moreover, we develop into having a fine as well as refined perception of our selves together with the "ambience" of our "location." In addition, being placed in the position of a creator generates not only an exhilarating and ecstatic sense, but also a notion of having ability to make a change to the landscape of the world, however infinitesimal. The better we get to know our egos and the existing things encircling us, the more composure we acquire in dealing with harsh realities of life. Thus, it would be an extremely beneficial way to gain serenity and peace.

A further secret, in other words, magic formula, of achieving peacefulness and tranquility is keeping company with intimate friends in whom we can confide and turn to, thereby bearing up well. This blessing - that is, enjoying help in our hour of need - is bestowed to a fortunate person who does not take this most precious chance for granted, and hence resists letting it go away easily. By appreciating friendship, one can surmount problems seemingly unmanageable. Also, a romantic relationship serves as a support on which one can fall back. This is mainly because of the fact that human beings are the most defenseless creatures, and hence the most dependent on each other's assistance.

In summary, there are various solutions, three helpful practices of which were already elaborated upon, through which one can refrain from tensions, and further, avoid giving way to the surrounding pressures. May one day, by and by, we stand the tide of anxiety, stress, and unhappiness one way or another.

539 words

Ghazal Keyhanfar: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

97. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? It is the responsibility of the young to provide financial and emotional security for the aged. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. **

Aging is an inevitable situation for each and every human being and everybody is going to experience it sooner or later. As far as I am concerned, the most important issue in this regard is the ability to maintain a joyful and satisfying lifestyle in the most efficient manner. There is a controversy as to whether who is responsible for providing security for this group belongs. Some people are of the opinion that government should take charge of this issue, while others believe that their children are better choices for this responsibility. I subscribe to the latter idea on the grounds that every person has abundant of memories of his or her parents efforts done without any expectations to pave the way for his or her success. Additionally the elderly are invaluable sources of blessing and wisdom in our lives.

To begin with, life is replete with ups and downs and the most kindly helping people for everybody are their parents. They are the most trustworthy people in every aspect of our lives. They see us as a part of their own entity and as the fruits of their lives so they try their best to make our future so desirable. They try to teach us how to surmount mundane obstacles of life and to see them as stepping stones for further triumphs. They even happen to sacrifice their own wishes for the sake of their children happiness. Hence, morally speaking, it is the responsibility of their children to take care of them when they are in demand of it.

Second, governmental helps as the so-called "nursing homes" are not capable of providing real emotional care and security, supposing that they can reduce their financial burden to some extent. Their social character is deeply rooted in their family relationships. Today, quite a few of physicians are of the idea that elder's physical health is highly correlated with their mental health which is based on their emotional security. They do not really feel healthy unless they feel being still beloved and respected by their family members. Sometimes they even pretend to be sick to evaluate others' reactions and draw more attentions. Therefore, in this regard, nothing is able to compensate for their children's attention.

Last but not least, the elderly are invaluable, priceless sources of experience and knowledge in our lives. They can help us to learn from their faults as they are eagerly ready to share their wordiness with us. Therefore, it would be possible for us to eschew a great number of misapplications, misapprehensions, miscalculations, misconceptions, misinterpretations and the most important one, misjudgments. Since the youth are prone to jump into conclusion based on no reasonable grounds, the presence of their wise parents can be of great, matchless value to expedite their way to success.

All in all, I do believe that it is not only preferred for the children to provide security for the elderly, but also it is mandatory for them to take charge of this responsibility. Let's not take the blessing of our parents for granted and try to be at their service as much as possible. It's the only rigorous way we can foster this culture for the next generation.

536 words

Dr. Davami, F.

98. People attend college or university for many different reasons (for example, new experiences, career preparation, and increased knowledge). Why do you think people attend college or university? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. *

College is a place that people go to university in order to augment their knowledge, achieve their goal of possessing a promising future, meet new people, and gain new experiences. I will try to <u>elaborate upon</u> the specific reasons for entering college, which, in my view, are the most important points in today's world.

First of all, every person wants to develop his or her knowledge. Students can only learn pivotal knowledge within high school, while they are able to concentrate on their own field of interest in college. An individual can acquire a wide spectrum of knowledge in various fields, which can help them overcome their difficulties in life. Higher education helps us to develop our horizons and to make progress in our intellectual life.

Second of all, colleges help students achieve their aims by preparing them for the career they have chosen. A degree from a college can give people more opportunities in addition to assuring them a decent job. As a result of four-year study, it is not difficult for us to find a good job. Nowadays, most of the companies only hire people who have at least a bachelor's degree. Accordingly, there is no doubt that higher education is a bridge through which we can accomplish what we think is best for our career.

Apart from the aforementioned advantages, attending a college and meeting new people from different backgrounds is a new challenge everyone can experience. College is a place where we can interact and communicate with new people, share information about different life styles, and probably live with a completely strong person, to name but a few. Moreover, we can experience a sense of freedom and independence. Although students may be burdened with some responsibilities while in college, these responsibilities seem to be urgent for their becoming mature.

In conclusion, with all this taken into account, I wish to say that studying in college gives us new opportunities to fulfill such goals and provides us with the basis for success in a decent career. Therefore, it is obvious that attending college makes substantial changes in our life, which is why everyone can find a good reason for going to one.

365 words

Shahriar Sefati: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

99. Which one is better for one's future job? Getting courses about diverse subjects or getting courses about one specific area. **

It is generally agreed that, from the dawn of human civilization, working and attempting to improve the quality of life has been one of the most important issues in every individual's life. In this regard, studying as much and efficiently as possible plays an important role in one's future career and their gaining money. I strongly agree with the fact that people should get courses about one particular field of study in order to work in a prosperous and successful manner in the future. The reasons why I believe so are manifold, two of which are scientific and financial advantages that are elaborated upon hereunder.

First and foremost, one essential factor of success in a career is to deeply understand all the aspects having to do with that field of study. With this in mind, statistically speaking, the people who make their best to study thoroughly and make progress drastically in one field of study are more scientifically successful as well as satisfied in their future career in an excellent fashion, as compared to the individuals who put their efforts to learn about different subjects. On the other hand, taking different courses from different majors while studying causes nothing but squandering their time. This is because, at the workplace, these kinds of people who have studied many different courses may have some positive effects at first, as they have a broad knowledge of many fields of study; however, because of their skin-deep knowledge, they are Jack-of-all-trades and master of none, and eventually like a flash in the pan.

The second debatable point which is remarkably worthy of being highlighted here is that studying a major deeply and making progress strikingly in it result in one's gaining much more money than those who have a shallow knowledge in many areas. By way of illustration, one of my clever and curious friends started his Bachelor's degree in chemical engineering; after a while, he changed his mind and altered his major to petroleum engineering. At the same time, he started his minor in marketing, and even now, after four years, he wants to apply for yet another major, quantitative economics. Despite having a "vast knowledge", he is not able to work and earn money, because he does not know what to do. On the other hand, one of my classmates tried to do quite a few researches in only one major, chemical engineering. Despite the fact that he was very ordinary in his grades, he joined the research group of one of the faculty members of a high-ranking university. Finally, not only did he invent a very useful heating machine, but he improved one of the most recent state-of-the-art devices in control laboratory as well, which brought him quite a bit of money.

In summary, by taking into account all the above-mentioned reasons and considerations, people had better study one field of knowledge deeply and become master of it. These experts will gain many benefits in their jobs, resulting in the most up-to-the-minute technological achievements, which conspicuously refines the standards of living all over the world.

Written in 30 minutes

517 words

Fatemeh Zareh: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

100. Some students like classes where teachers lecture (do all of the talking) in class. Other students prefer classes where the students do some of the talking. Which type of class do you prefer? Give specific reasons and details to support your choice. *

As one of the bases of every society, educational system has always been the focus of attention. In fact, one of the concerns of every society is that how they can improve the educational system effectively. With this in mind, the interaction between students and teachers in the class in general and their behavior in particular are very important. In this regard, one controversial question is that whether students should do some of the talking in the class or otherwise. As far as I am concerned, because of some reasons, mentioned hereunder, I certainly do agree that students should talk in the class.

First of all, if students talk and cooperate in the class, the teacher can address their problems effectively. This is mainly because of the fact that in this way, the teacher is able to find out the weaknesses in students' learning. In addition, the advantage of students' talking and cooperating in the class is two-fold. In other words, not only can teachers understand students' problems and therefore try to remove them, but also they are able to find out the students' strong points and teach the subject in an excellent fashion. Moreover, if the teacher is the only person who talks in the class, the students will feel bored and become distracted; however, if they participate in discussions, they will have to pay attention. For instance, I always fell asleep in the geography class in the high school because the teacher always talked in a continuous, monotonous, boring manner. She never asked students any questions or explanations.

Secondly, by talking and cooperating in discussions, students learn how to express their ideas without any fear, and in an appropriate manner. Simply put, they learn to be self-assured, and as a result, self-confidence is inculcated in them from childhood. Being confident and knowing how to express themselves is one of the key factors in students' success in their future careers. Some research conducted by sociologists shows that students who effectively take part in discussions in the class can be successful as a manager. This is mainly because they become confident individuals who know how to persuade their employees.

In summary, I believe that students should take part in talking and discussion in the class. In this way, they will have the opportunity to find out the flaws in their learning and do not feel bored. In addition, they will prepare for their future job in an effective way.

409 words

Lida Safarnejad: Amirkabir University of Technology

101. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Childhood is the happiest period in human life." Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. ***

The dream of youngsters is to grow old, and it is likewise the dream of adults to relive youth. Aside from that, generally speaking, perhaps because barely can a person remember their true feelings experienced in childhood, people tend to believe that childhood is like a heaven in that one – when a child - has no responsibility or constraint, nor are they shackled by the "proprieties" and social restrictions, and therefore, hardly can a child be concerned about anything. Of course, there is some truth in all this, but only up to a point. For all that, provided that there actually was a happy chapter in a human's lifetime, I would definitely not pick out childhood as the most cheerful one. It probably contrasts with the opinion held by many, perceiving a child's state as joyful. However, I have some thoughts on my disagreement, which are as follows.

First and foremost, a child, as it is connoted from its name, is a creature with indefinite desires and needs, as well as unlimited cognition. Accordingly, a child, not yet been accustomed to the boundaries of objective world - as opposed to the subjective one - wishes to experience miscellaneous activities, known as "troublemaking" or at best "playful misbehavior." However, since there is no way for parents but to condition their child in order for them to take part in society and be mainstreamed into adult life, a child is condemned to encounter dos and don'ts in each and every step they take, invariably. This becomes even harsher when considering that a child, by nature, cannot conceive any disability or impossibility whatsoever.

Moreover, being a child is equivalent to living as an extraterrestrial creature in the planet earth, so to speak. If you may well ask why I make such a strange comparison, my answer is that owing to how the human brain develops when growing into maturity, scarcely has an adult proved apprehending a child's desires and tendencies, nor can they have the slightest idea of the structure of a child's mind. Thus, being unintelligible and impenetrable, a child either is treated with disapproval and punishment, or receives feigned and unreal praise and admiration, suggesting the "carrot and stick" rearing policy. A probable consequence is undergoing internal contradictions as well as an unaccountable inner turmoil.

Taking into account diverse matters, two of which were elaborated upon, I decide that childhood, in truth, is quite an unsettling and turbulent stage in one's lifetime, and therefore, not qualified to be known as the happiest days of our lives.

425 words

Ghazaal Keyhanfar: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

102. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The best things in life do not cost money. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. ***

In this world, everything has a price, yet this price is not always evaluated by money. As a fundamental element in socio-economic context, money plays an absolutely essential role in our life; however, money is not what life is all about. The gift of life has some precious characteristics such as wisdom, experiences and knowledge, as well as human virtues, which are beyond price.

Wisdom is one of the greatest gifts mankind can ever enjoy; it is a deep understanding of people, things, events or situations, resulting in the ability to choose or act to consistently produce the optimum results with a minimum of time and energy. Wisdom is the comprehension of what is true or right coupled with optimum judgment as to action. With this in mind, wisdom is an invaluable power, which cannot be bought from anyone or any place.

Life, as I have experienced it thus far, has been made up of many layers and images. My self-knowledge is a series of stories, series of images, each trying to show me what and how I need to expand the perception or idea I have of myself in any given moment. During my life, I have had sequences of experiences that have molded me and my thinking into the person I think I am now. Without knowledge and experiences, life is something absurd and meaningless.

Finally, our life has been based on virtues, which are priceless. Virtue originates in our innermost thoughts and desires. Each individual has a core of underlying values that contribute to his or her system of beliefs, ideas, and opinions. In order to live as a human, we need "truthfulness" as a foundation of all human virtues, "faith" as a steadfastness in belief, "hope" as an expectation and desire of achievement, and "charity" as a selfless, unconditional, and voluntary loving-kindness.

Indeed, it is not necessary to be rich so that one can understand the above-mentioned things in their life. The point is that money is an object to reach a goal, not a goal to reach. I believe that life has a meaning and it can be expressed through a variety of related questions such as why we are here, what life is all about, and what the meaning of it is. To this end, our wisdom, knowledge, and virtues can help us understand the answer to those questions and it has nothing to do with how much money we have.

409 words

103. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: books are not needed any more because people can read information on computers. *

It is an <u>incontrovertible</u> fact that computers have changed our lives in so many ways. In my opinion, one of them is that we barely need books anymore. In fact, we can have all the information we need on our laptops or computers. Some old-fashioned people or as we can call them luddites hold the opinion that books are irreplaceable. I strongly disagree with them since I believe that nowadays people are more concerned about saving their time, money, and natural resources than before and due to these factors they prefer E-books over paper based books.

In order to provide paper, we need to cut trees, leading to deforestation, and as we all know, it has <u>quite a few</u> detrimental effects on our lives, <u>namely</u> decreasing the level of oxygen in atmosphere and global warming. Due to the fact that the young care more about their environment, they try to use computers for reading in order to let the number of trees that are being cut down decline.

Most of us like to drink or eat while reading books, so spilling a cup of coffee on our books seems like a frequent accident for most of us, but <u>thanks to</u> computers, this would not be a problem anymore. We do not need to be watchful from now on. About half of us are bespectacled, and when we want to read, we spend a great deal of time looking for our glasses, but computers have a good solution to this, by zooming in or zooming out one can adjust the size of words in a way he or she can read them without needing any glasses.

Last but not least, wasting too much time on getting the book they are fond of seems like a big struggle for bookworms to overcome. First of all, due to traffic and not having a car of their own, they need to spend <u>quite a bit of</u> time and money to reach a library or a bookstore and second of all, they might not even get what they were looking for. E-books have a solution to these issues as well; one can buy them by the Internet in just a second. <u>As for</u> the latter problem, one can just read all the comments and reviews that have been written by readers and critics and find out whether or not this is the book they were looking for.

To sum up, I believe in a future not far away from now, as we walk on the streets, there would not be any bookstores. As we all know, the world is going into the direction of efficiency, green life, and, as I already stated E-books have all these features.

449 words

Kiana: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

Entering university is one of the most important events that can ever happen in one's life. It is defined as the illuminator of life path, but the university duration is important itself. It is very important to decide about the university, the courses it offers, and the places the students may stay in during semesters. Mostly, there are two options for every student: staying in campus or staying in a house off campus. Many may find it difficult to choose one, but I, personally, think that the advantages of staying in the campus <u>outweigh</u> the disadvantages of it.

First, making money has become very hard recently; therefore, no one wants to lose it without a logical reason. A vast majority of universities present campuses for students. Collegians can bring down the expenses by going to a campus. They will have to pay less money as rent, sometimes halved, and additionally, in quite a few universities, scholars can be served free daily dishes. On the other hand, house renting expenses are rising steadily; consequently, paying rents can be very hard for a huge number of students.

Second, meeting new people is experimental and/as well as practical. Everyone can boost his or her social skills by being in contact with others. Campus is full of students from different parts of the country or even the world, with different ideas, beliefs, races, and values. It not only improves social skills, but also helps one to find friends that may be very useful in the future. As a result, campus is a chance given to the students to find friends. It is also highly recommended for the international students to participate in campus as well.

Third, in most countries, students enter college at age 18 or after that; they are still too young, though. Hence, they need elders to take care of them. Campus is much safer than private houses; it is well equipped in security standards; moreover, campuses have sentinels to guard the campus. Thus, many parents may find it easier to transfer their children to the campus dormitories.

Finally, I do share the view of attending campus instead of a house at least for the first year due to the fact that it is cheaper, safer, and better for students' social skills. Statistically speaking, nowadays, more than half of the collegians attend campus for several positive reasons; furthermore, campus is the right option for obsessive parents, too.

406 words

Gelare Malekpour

105. The college years are the best time in a person's life. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give specific reasons to support your position. **

People enter college to get a degree and guarantee their career for the rest of their life. However, parallel to this strict goal, there are thousands of opportunities by which an individual can manage himself or herself to the <u>zenith</u> of success. I agree that the college years are the most amazing and remarkable years of one's life. There are many reasons for that, among which opportunities for people to socialize with each other, improving their social skills, and, the most important of them finding their greatest talent in life are the most impressive ones.

Human beings are social creatures and need socializing for their evolution. Social <u>dynamism</u> are like fuel for human moral engine. In college, one can find lifetime friends, who can act as a <u>buttress</u> for him or her in the face of hardships. In addition, they can make great business connections from which they can acquire a great amount of benefit in the future. Furthermore, it is very probable for the students to find their soul mate in the college and live the rest of their life in love.

No other place can give people the opportunity to improve their social skills compared to the colleges and universities. College atmosphere is a perfectly detailed <u>simulation</u> of the real world in which students can <u>practice</u> and improve their skills. For instance, one can learn how to act and talk politely toward others, so he or she can get his or her work done by them in the least amount of time possible by creating a win-win situation for both parties, with which they all get satisfied.

"Every single person is created for a single important purpose." Therefore, one of the most important goals in a person's life must be to find this critical purpose and go for it. There exist numerous communities in colleges, which covers sports, art, and many other fields. Enthusiastic for success, a student can try many of them and <u>unearth</u> his or her talent, <u>nurture</u> it, and by means of which do marvelous things. Shahin, my friend, who studies mechanical engineering, found that he was a good singer and became very famous just in a matter of few months <u>thanks to</u> being cognizant of his dormant talent of him, which was recognized in the college.

According to these reasons and so many others, it is believed that the college years are the golden years of a person's life. In the future, again and again, we will see great men and women, who start their journey toward success in the college.

427 words

Khashayar Yazdanbakhsh: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

In the past, homes were <u>simply</u> any place, which could protect one from predators such as wild animals, or natural phenomena such as snow and storm, <u>to name but two</u>. However, for today's human, in addition to being means of protection, it is a place in which everyone seeks <u>solace</u> and beauty. Keeping this in mind, people, who have different tastes, use different materials and ornaments to build and design their houses. As an example, some prefer traditional houses <u>rather than</u> modern apartments. However, I, personally, prefer to live in a modern apartment.

First of all, nowadays, <u>state-of-the-art</u> architecture has developed conspicuously. In fact, as humans have made progress in technology, now, <u>quite a few</u> materials and tools are available to build a structure. Therefore, there are few limitations for architectures to construct a building, which, in turn, has let them use spaces and materials in an excellent and optimum fashion. As an example, a sixty-meter square apartment may seem two times as big as a house the same size. As another example, most modern apartments are designed in a way that mostly they use solar energy to produce heat, and therefore do not use fossil fuels anymore.

Secondly, it is common knowledge that if someone resists change, they are definitely <u>doomed</u> to fail. In fact, technology is developing dramatically and we ought to adopt ourselves to the new way of life, which is influenced by technology. As a person who lives in the 21st century, I believe that we should use technology in every aspect of our life, and our shelter is no exception. Technology has provided today's humans with various kinds of accommodations and facilities. Why don't we use them?

All in all, taking into account what was already mentioned/ what was mentioned before have been mentioned, there are several merits in living a modern apartment. In fact, it can provide its dwellers with many facilities, which traditional houses cannot.

323 words

Lida Safarnejad: Amirkabir University of Technology

107. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? There's nothing that an uneducated person can teach an educated person. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.
***

That everyone has to be in rush so as not to be left behind in contending for the "field of competition" is the essential nucleus of today's society. In order for a person to "succeed" all the faster "day by day", they are required to pass the stages of academic course such that the higher rank is attained, the more prestige in social standing is gained. Yet, hardly can anyone guarantee acquiring high level of knowledge, intellect, or wisdom by attending university. Many an aspect of life is out of reach of being "guaranteeable." Thus, not a single person can claim that he or she is utterly perfect due to their dignity, and therefore I would have to disagree with the idea of "unteachability" of the educated by the uneducated due to diverse thoughts, two of which are as follows.

One of the most priceless assets, by virtue of which a person is blessed with true happiness and contentment is love. Regardless of the number of books a person has read or the number of good grades they have obtained, one without experiencing love would be nothing but an information machine. Accordingly, many a time, an uneducated person understands delicate emotions far better and deeper than a highly ranked scholar. This is one of the qualities that can be conveyed by the uneducated to the educated ones.

Equally important is the sense of righteousness. As we can plainly see, morality has nothing to do with education. Many a decent person is not even able to read. Still, they enjoy not only more sense of humanity, but a great conception of the very essence of life. Who can deny the fact that all of us have had an affinity and connected with the poor underclass people portrayed in the novels of Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo and the like?

In light of these thoughts and many others as well, I strictly disagree with the mentality that the uneducated are incapable of imparting valuable lessons to the educated. Yet, I hope that one day society would treat people equally so that they all will be entitled to equal opportune of schooling.
358 words
Ghazal Keyhanfar: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

108. Some people argue for a broad university education in which students learn about many different subjects. Others argue for specialized university education in which students learn only about a specific field of study. Which would you prefer? Use reasons and specific details to explain your choice. *

As Charles Dickens once said, "I never could have done what I did without determination to concentrate myself on a particular subject at a time." Nowadays, there are a number of people who subscribe to the view that a university should prepare students with various subjects, while others believe that a good learner is the one who has concentrated on a solitary specialty during his or her education. The question which comes in mind here is whether one should specialize in one certain field or otherwise. In this writer's opinion, in spite of the fact that both of these points of view may be defendable, it is better for collegians to focus their minds and abilities on a single subject rather than being puzzled among abundant topics. The reasons for this idea fall into three categories.

First of all, everybody believes that different people have varied interests. For example, one person may be concerned about politics and economic problems, while another is interested in earth sciences. If they study both economics and earth sciences simultaneously, they might never have the chance to discover their own favorites and what they are truly supposed to become in their future life.

Secondly, acquiring knowledge in many issues at the same time will result in confusion and superficial learning. A person who studies many things does not know much about each of them and also would never suit a professional activity in his or her/their lifetime. Such great scientists as Edison, Einstein, and Madam Curie will be shining like the stars in everyone's heart. They localized their intellect on an individual theme and had crowning success. Thanks to their inventions, the society is growing faster and faster. Is it right to state that it was more preferable for them to care about diverse issues instead of/rather than one?

The last but not the least important reason is that, as we all know, deep knowledge is a passionate desire, which can be achieved only by means of focusing. It is due to the nature of our mind that cannot handle multiple problems at the same time. If one learns two or more fields simultaneously, practically, they know about them skin-deep. For instance, consider a situation in which a person has to know about history, physics, and music. Although they might have some minor similarities, he or she neither becomes a great musician, nor a good physician or historian in that/for the reason that they do not have adequate time to spend on each of them.

No matter what you are inclined to, focus on your favorite field and dispense with/do away with others. Based on the grounded causes mentioned above, I firmly claim that centralizing on a single area is much more beneficial than administrating several.

457 words

Narges Fallahi: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

109. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Subjects such as art, music, and drama should be a part of every child's basic education. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. **

Stella Adler once said that, "Life beats down and crushs the soul, and art reminds you that you have one." It is crystal clear that in the current world in which the most important portion of minds are involved with some trivial problems, which are the components of modern life style, including financial problems, learning a kind of art like music, painting, and drama can be a shelter for our tired spirit. To tell the truth, learning art can be a brilliant chance for one to air new ideas, have stronger national identity, and live in peace; therefore, it is essential for the new generation to learn these kinds of arts.

With the evolution of the world and with the life style of human beings changing, one faces more complicated relationships and situations. As a result, to express feelings or new ideas, being an expert in one field of art can be an airtight and guaranteed way. In this situation, promoting the creativity level of individuals can be helpful. Moreover, self-expression usually coexists with self-confidence, which is a fundamental element for children to realize their ambitions in the future, and to be a winner in the struggle of life.

Another reason why general public agree with this statement that learning art should be a part of basic education is that art is a universal language, showing our rich culture. Furthermore, it is a substantial right of the next generation to have a lively culture to be proud of their identity. Certainly, art is the best way to keep our culture intact for the next generation.

The other aspect of learning art in schools and universities is that our children will have a proper way to get away from the hustle and bustle of modern life style to release their mind and charge their batteries to be more energetic and creative in their main assignments and responsibilities in their private life. Last but not least, it can be helpful to have mental health and enough motivation to be successful in the future.

Based on all the factors mentioned above, we can conclude that learning art at school days can be a great opportunity for our children to be qualified enough to cope with their future problems with a high and boosted spirit. Obviously, the government should allocate more budget and attention to this issue in order to have more genius thoughts and more confident personalities in the next generation. By so doing, having a utopian society is not that far-fetched.
419 words
Bita Vaseghi

110. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Good teachers set challenging tasks for their students. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer. ***

Whether "challenge" signifies inviting someone to do what they consider difficult or impossible, or it denotes testing abilities, I disagree with this manner of teaching, that is, requiring children to take part in competition - even if it is a competition with oneself. To the best of my understanding, this method suffers from several drawbacks, two of which are as follows.

In the first place, I am anti competition in all its forms. Indeed, I am of the opinion that each and every single human has its own individual, characteristic virtues in addition to capabilities peculiar to themselves, and hence putting students in the place of opponents of one another is utterly degrading in the exact sense of the word. With challenging tasks held collectively, children are made to believe that life is nothing but proving superiority to others. Furthermore, those who, one way or another, fail in carrying out the demanding job will be humiliated in front of their fellows, and as it is expected, they are likely to undergo a permanent lack of self-confidence, to name but one of its downsides.

The second but not less significant disadvantage of this conduct has to do with the matter of content of education. I consider that it is a misjudgment about the objective of educating, to regard it as accomplishing difficult or perplexing tasks. Rather, I see school as a place where youngsters will enjoy a wider view of the long-established world they have come into, not much long ago, by learning rudimentary and fundamental subjects, namely history, linguistics, as well as basic principles of physics and mathematics- inasmuch as it is necessary.

In view of these thoughts elaborated upon, I firmly believe that school is not a place at which children are taught to take part in contests and rivalries, but a place that they can learn how to live together peacefully and conduct themselves with tolerance in areas where their views diverge. Accordingly, there is a need to replace what has hitherto been a misconception about the very purpose of sending children to school with whatever instills a sense of rightness in the young.

356 words

Ghazal Keyhanfar: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

111. In the future, students may have the choice of studying at home by using technology such as computers or television or of studying at traditional schools. Which would you prefer? Use reasons and specific details to explain your choice. *

It would not be an exaggeration if one says that the 21st century is the Internet century. Nowadays everything deals with the Internet, directly or indirectly, and the educational system in many countries is no exception. In this regard, one controversial question which comes to one's mind is which one is better: traditional classes or the Internet-based ones. As far as I am concerned, the traditional classes can be more effective in students' learning.

First of all, psychologists believe that students can learn and understand a subject effectively when they take part in a group in general, and in a classroom with other students in particular. In fact, traditional classrooms have a dynamic environment, which the Internet-based ones do not have. Some argue that by taking the online classes, one can save a great amount of time. However, I believe that the demerits of this approach outweigh its merits. The main disadvantage of online classes is that students are prevented from the aforementioned dynamic atmosphere, which a traditional class has. More precisely, in traditional classrooms, students have a chance to cooperate with other students to learn a subject. In addition, they can have contribution in the process of learning, in which the teacher is not the only one who talks. As an example, students can ask questions when they cannot understand an issue, or as another example, by presentation or giving lectures, they even can cooperate with the teacher to instruct them.

Secondly, as humans are social creatures, they need to socialize with others to satisfy their needs. Nowadays, sociologists and psychologists believe that one of the most important humans' needs is love and to be loved. In this regard, establishing friendships plays a crucial role in everyone's life. Another disadvantage in taking Internet-based classes is that by doing so, students would be deprived of socializing with other students and it would be less probable to make friends, in comparison with attending traditional classes.

All in all, taking into account what was already mentioned, there are several merits in attending traditional classrooms. In fact, by doing so, students can cooperate and socialize with others which, in turn, leads their success in both the learning process and establishing friendships.
367 words
Lida Safarnejad: Amirkabir University of Technology

112. Why do we need music? Is the traditional music of a country more important than the international music that is heard everywhere today? **

History is full of <u>inevitable</u> evidence of events created and placed by mankind. Throughout the evolution of humans in history, they have looked for harmony, peace, and equilibrium to fulfill their need of perfection. One of the definite ways to attain their wills was music, which has influenced us ever since. Every tribe had its own instruments and their own style in music. Thus, as time passed, music and rhythms (flow) became every nation's inherited value that was achieved during the history.

Traditional music, in the first place, as an introducer of a nation's music with its own characteristics has a delicate and dominant influence on its people. Features like social and cultural interactions or, in some cases, tribal and historical events could be a great factor in forming a traditional way of music. Yet, by the development and combination of different sorts of music, traditional sorts were left behind but kept their place as a role model to other sorts of music.

By the passage of time, with <u>privileges</u> of technology in making new electronic instruments instead of the acoustic ones, and by the help of data transferring, we made new sorts and genres of music, with a vast spectrum of varieties, which became globally accepted by people. Thus, it placed a deep impression on people and mostly juveniles to accept and get along with this kind of music. Although international music brought fusion styles in our life, it swapped the history of our own native music styles so much so that some do not even recognize their own tribal music genres.

Traditional music made a great influence on human nature, it influenced the feelings and thoughts of mankind, and, above all, it introduced every nation's taste of music and rhythm. On the other hand, international music gave birth to a new era in human history of music; it mixed and re-mixed different music of various countries. It changed people's taste and brought flexibility in it. By this, I take stands for international music as a new approach of human beings to place a deep impact and a wide spread accepted sort of music as a better and more effective model in the music world.

366 words

Kasra Jabbary

113. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Sometimes a teacher will be listened to, where a parent might not. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. *

It is beyond doubt that before the age at which children attend school, upon their attitude, parents are the symbols of wisdom and intelligence. Parents are their most important "media" and they accept and believe whatever they "broadcast." However, as they gradually grow up and face the world outside home, and pass their mythical period, they start to absorb new things, especially those which are gained at school.

Regarding psychological and hormonal status, during adolescence, teens start to disapprove of whatever their parents say or think, although most of the time they overreact and are wrong, which is because parents may not expect anything <u>other than</u> the benefit of their children. However, a kind of defence mechanism forms in their minds to refuse all the parent-related thoughts, so they start to search for new attractive sources to pay attention to.

Children at these ages are easily attracted to other people, who, compared to the parents, think and talk differently. They meet different teachers and other people under the flag of education, realizing some paradoxes between home and outside, and have to decide who is right and who is wrong. Commonly, teenagers decide to accept the new sources, as they think of it as the more accurate ones. In my own experience, when I was a teenager, one of our teachers, who was also our advisor, became my new hero, and as a result had a comparably greater impact on me, because of his intelligence and charismatic character.

If one refutes the above reasoning, and assumes that children remain loyal to their parents' attitudes, and do not look for other sources during their adolescence, they cannot deny the fact that the great amount of time which children and their teachers share during school time results in the formation a powerful friendly connection between students and teachers, leading to a lot of associations and reciprocal admirations. Thus, it is not unexpected to find students who listen to their teachers as if he or she were their older brother or sister.

As a conclusion, although children might sometimes listen to their teachers instead of their parents, I think it is not always a bad thing and I take it as a sign of the process of maturation and gaining independence.
377 words
Saman Abdollahi

114. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Solitude, spending time alone, is one of our best teachers. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. **

Life is manifestation of our feelings and experiences. To be a part of this play, we need to experience distinctive periods in our life. Every stage of it can teach us something new just like a teacher. As Voltaire once said, "The happiest of all men is a busy recluse." In this regard, I, for one, subscribe to the idea that solitude is an ideal state, which is conquered by those who believe in themselves. It has a number of advantages, three of which—that is—independence, life management, and spiritual growth are the most conspicuous ones.

A mature consideration will reveal the need for independence in humans' growing process. It can bring immense benefits to us, such as freedom and self-reliance. Independence is a state in which one should decide autonomously on every aspect of his or her life. This kind of decision making not only will shape one's thoughts, experiences, and characteristic but will increase the self-confidence of them as well.

Furthermore, spending time in solitude can be considered as a full-time life management course in which the teacher is solitude. Drawing a plan in order to identify how much time we want to devote to any different activity would be the first step, and the second step refers to the following question: how much money do we want to pay for each activity? In order to go through these steps, one should become aware of his or her basic needs and demands first. Therefore, solitude also leads to choose a significant lifestyle.

The last aspect to elaborate on has to do with spiritual growth. Apart from the pain, anxiety, depression, some sorts of illusion, and the bitter taste of loneliness, solitude can also lead to the gratification of one's ego. It may result in one's self discovery, which emancipates the people from being at the mercy of technology and some hectic and chaotic daily obligations. Devoting some hours to loneliness not only enhances/amplify the advantages of companionship and social relations but help people feed their spirit for these social interactions, as well.

All in all, no matter how painful solitude may be, it should be kept in mind that experiencing an independent life, scheming a special lifestyle, and going through the spirituality in this anarchic era are expressing the glory of solitude regarded as a path to live a cheerful life.
394 words
Nazanin Akrami: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

115. Do you think that television programs, movies, and video games influence young people's behavior? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer. *

People of today's society - that is, the modern world - have substituted religion and rituals by such new entities as television, movies, and many kinds of games such as video games. Of so great significance are these phenomena that it would not be exaggerating to say that the life of the youth of today revolves around them. Thus, it stands to reason that the current language has originated the word "couch potato" referring to those who lie in front of television, roughly speaking, all hours. Likewise, we can generate a word such as "joystick potato" concerning those who treat video games as such. Needless to say, I definitely am of the opinion that TV programs, movies, and video games not only exert an influence, but have a significant impact on the youth's behavior, on a number of counts, three of which are as follows.

Firstly, as was implied before, the aforementioned contrivances entail preventing the young from having wholesome lives, including an adequate amount of physical exercise, enjoying companionship of friends and family for a proper length of time, and such. This is mainly because they do not allow "free" time for dedicating to anything but tracing moving figures on the screen.

Secondly but not less importantly, as a matter of factual cases and for some unclear purpose, these objects - that is, TV programs, cartoons, and indeed video games - are inciting violence and aggression, into which hardly can anyone resist absorbing and assimilating. With these ferocious images and scenes imparted to the young, we are witnessing a rising tide of brutishness, savagery, and sadistic behavior, unfortunately not restricted to the young when young, but to them when mature as politicians and governors.

Last but of the utmost importance is the matter of emotions and sensibility. In the current socio-cultural climate, parents are not so much concerned about their children's inner character and psyche as they are with keeping them in pace with state-of-the-art technology in general, and anything having to do with computers in particular. For instance, my sister and I, having spent a great portion of our childhood playing in garden with sheep, dogs, rabbits, and other animals, we became empathetic and emotional persons, in stark contrast to today's young people, dealing practically all their waking time with electronic devices.

Taking into account these considerations discussed above, I conclude that television programs, movies, and video games have a substantial negative effect on the young of current-day. Therefore, I think there is an essential need to revolutionize the content of media collectively.

425 words

Ghazal Keyhanfar: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

116. What changes do you think the new century will bring? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. **

Just one hundred years ago, the idea of speaking with a friend located in a considerable distance from where you are, or eating a fresh exotic summer fruit in a cold European winter just sounded like a pipe dream, but now these seem commonplace, and we gradually got used to watching the world go by like this. New century has brought us so many changes, and it is persisting in bringing more. On the one hand, it will offer modern convenience, but on the other, it will cause "synthetic lifestyle" which recklessly endangers both our peace and quiet, and the wildlife.

Our lives seem more comfortable compared with those of our parents, and we owe it to technology. Technology is capable of turning the world into a global village. Nowadays, telecommunication is involved in quite every aspect of our lives, from an ordinary online chat to a complicated delicate operation on webcam. Therefore, what I would think the new century will bring is a lifestyle change caused by state-of-the-art equipment entering our lives every minute of every day. The new generation of high-speed internet will lead people into keeping in touch with one another in virtual communities like Facebook rather than in real world. The shopping will be limited to i-Shops only, and as a result, less time and energy will be spent on transportation. We will not get stuck in traffic jams and endless queues anymore. Furthermore, less dissatisfaction will be created over mistakes since, by pushing a back button, so many things would turn as right as they were! In order to meet the need of connecting to the worldwide web, free wireless net services will be open to public, which means people will be expected to keep themselves up-to-date, as well as being fast and precise.

As long as the world enjoys basking in the reflected glory of technology, it has to bear the consequences of the changes for the worse! Although the advent of the Internet let us do things in a faster, easier, and more efficient manner, it put us in the danger of behaving unconfidently in the society. In addition to the harmful replacement of going around to friends' homes with greeting them on the phone or chat room, having to speed up our reactions will change human's life to a miserably stressful one. Moreover, unwelcome environmental changes, namely the depletion of the ozone layer, rising sea level and greenhouse gases will irreparably disturb the ecological balance.

In summary, I think the most noticeable change of the future is one of the lifestyle, which will occur by the evolution of technology in general, and telecommunication as well as modern equipment in particular. And other changes which definitely sound unpleasant to us are the deterioration of peace in human's life in the shadows of concerning to be fast enough to catch up with the world and global problems which will slowly destroy our planet.

489 words
Razieh Rezaei: Amirkabir University of Technology (Tehran Polytechnic)

117. Many people visit museums when they travel to new places. Why do you think people visit museums? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. ***

Since the dawn of humanity to current days, human beings have passed an extraordinary journey. The hunter-gatherer creatures have developed into civilized citizens with a huge amount of technological achievements. In today's world, however, there is a controversy whether one should value the past by visiting museums or should forget about this tremendous background. As far as I am concerned, the advantages of considering the history overweigh those of ignoring it. One of the both common and entertaining methods of valuing the past is visiting museums. I have a penchant for visiting museums in any trip for some reasons, among which valuing the current achievements, realizing the past technology and mysteries, and learning from historical cycles are more significant.

The notion that the past is an awesome treasure is agreed by all. All the scientific research and achievements have been grounded on past experiences. Just imagine the mankind's life situation if we were not given the invaluable heritage of our ancestors, that is, language, natural resources, and different fields of science, to name but a few. Stopping being arrogant, human beings should value their history by visiting museums and learning about his ancestors. By means of this grateful attitude, he may cultivate a sense of responsibility of the following generations. In other words, he may be more cautious in consuming limited sources, since he considers all the people of all generations as a close-knit family.

Another privilege of visiting museums is learning from our ancestor's technology and method of thinking, as it is a superficial point of view to consider we are better than them in all the fields and matters. As an illustration to this concept, consider the following example. The great pyramid of Gizza, which is one of the world's greatest wonders, has been constructed thousands of years ago. The extraordinary point is that our contemporary engineers are not able to realize how this masterpiece has been built by that limited deal of technique.

Last but not least, going to museums can provide the visitors with a great amount of information about historical cycles. A history admirer certainly knows that many mistakes have been repeated during different historical periods. Accordingly, learning about the history in different types of museums can help us to prevent from many errors. That is to say, by means of visiting museums and considering its hidden stories and realities we can be the fortunate beneficiary of previous trials and errors.

To sum up, with all this taken into account, I strongly believe that visiting museums can be an ideal activity in any trip. It is not only beneficial but also fun. Just try it this time!
442 words
Setare Ariafar: University of Tehran

118. If you could go back to some time and place in the past, when and where would you go? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice. *

On the one hand, as the world is changing and progressing towards advanced technology, any individual expects to live a better and easier life, but on the other, for several reasons, we are witnessing a genuine desire anyone has to go back to a specific time or place in the past. If I were afforded the opportunity to go back to a specific time in the past, I would choose to go back to the time at which I was studying at university. The reasons why I want to return to that time are as follows.

The first reason making me enthusiastic about going back to my first year as a student at university is the atmosphere of it and the friends whom I met at that time. There was quite a friendly atmosphere at my university. I established friendly relationships with many students who studied in different fields of science. These kinds of relationships not only had a major effect on my personal life, it brought about significant progress in my academic education as well. Students studying different fields of science have various visions of the world. Communicating with these kinds of people gave me a completely new perspective toward life. I strongly believe that there are some people who make a truly memorable time for us, and we always want to turn back to that time at which we were together.

Another reason why I am interested in going back to that time is for great opportunities provided for me to try new things. Nowadays, there is a dramatic progress in science and technology. Consequently, to lead a well-balanced life, one needs to take other courses besides one's/his or her major field. At that time, I had many opportunities to develop my skills and carry out experiments in different fields of science. I have never had such good experiences since then. For me to vie with my competitors, I feel I need to expand my knowledge and have more skills. In this regard, if I were able to go back to that time, I would do my best to take the golden opportunities.

In conclusion, in this busy world, sometimes a person wishes to stop the time and go back to the past so as to either enjoy those truly unforgettable times or compensate for his or her lack of experience and mistakes, to name but two. Were I able to go back to the past, I would definitely choose to return to the time when I was a university student. By doing so, I would do my best to gain more experience and improve my knowledge as well as enjoy being with my best friends I have ever had.
452 words
Zahra Nasiri Toosi: University of Tehran

119. Which do you approve of: marriage before or after the age of thirty? Give specific reasons to support your opinion. ***

It is incontrovertibly axiomatic that marriage is a crucially important milestone in anyone's life. It plays such an important role that a person's success is heavily based on this critical juncture of life. Many lives and futures languish and flourish owing to this very weighty matter. While some people advocate marriage before the age of 30, I subscribe to this idea that marriage must come about after the age of 30 on the grounds that one gets mature-minded and reaches financial stability. In addition, one chooses his or her spouse based on logic.

It is manifest that people become mentally mature through the passage of time. Thirty years is a reasonable span of time that people are expected to have gained enough experience. Generally speaking, people wade into the vicissitudes of life and have to brave life with all its concomitant trials and tribulations. This includes exposures to society, university, and personal as well as professional contacts with the outside world. Therefore, being worldly wise comes into play in a prosperous and harmonious marriage, which is nothing short of an alliance and partnership.

30 years is a substantial portion of life during which people can reach financial stability. By this age, the majority of people have already reached high social status. This enables them to support their families in the face of problems, especially the ones which have to do with money. Furthermore, they are more likely to bring up their children well because they afford to provide all the best possible things for their families, and finance wise, they back up their offspring and prepare the ground for them to grow up and burgeon in the bosom of the family.

Mutual understanding rather than impulsive emotions (transient whims) is a significant driving force at around the age of 30. Statistically speaking, marriages are less prone to failure after the age of 30 because people get attracted to each other through logic and perspicacity. People at this age tend to pay more attention to matters more important than looks and appearance such as intellectual compatibility, family backgrounds and types, academic achievements, and the social status of their partners before marriage. Consequently, these marriages are less likely to culminate in divorce.

In summary, an opportune time for marriage to take place is after the age of 30 because people become hard-bitten, financially stable as well as becoming circumspect. Marriage is a holy alliance that requires commitment, partnership, and compromise that we cannot afford to take lightly.
414 words
Akbari: TOEFL Instructor

120. Some people prefer to spend most of their time alone. Others like to be with friends most of the time. Do you prefer to spend your time alone or with friends? Give reasons to support your answer. **

As human beings are born with a social nature, there is always a tendency among them to participate in groups (socialize with others). Thus, if we are to choose between spending time on our own and gathering with friends, we will probably prefer the latter. We all have experiences of the moments during which we had a lot of fun with our friends, as well as the cooperative <u>feats</u>, which we were not able to handle/cope with alone. In addition, social relationships provide us with opportunities to find a suitable marriage partner.

First of all, being with friends paves the way for us to have a broad spectrum of activities. For instance, going on a trip and partying are too boring, or even impossible to be done alone. Although these activities can be time-consuming, they are worth doing, as they create unforgettable/indelible memories in our lives. Everybody needs some moments to be relaxed on his or her own; however, if the span lasts too much, they will become bored and lethargic. In more serious cases, one can even gradually become isolated and unable to communicate with others.

Also, it is a general/common knowledge that setting about a task accompanied by a group makes for a better result than working it out individually. Spending abundant time with friends helps us generate links to a diversity of people, with whom we can share ideas and competencies. As a result, we are able to undertake challenging jobs having their support, as well as to cooperate with them when necessary.

Furthermore, through friendship, we can develop an authentic knowledge of the people surrounding us. If someone seeks a marriage partner, it is logical for them to choose from among his or her friends. Statistics indicate that the people who had a prior relationship with their spouses, experience (<u>enjoy</u>) more successful and persistent marriages than the people who marry soon after the first acquaintance is made.

To sum up, being with friends brings us memorable moments of fun, a high efficiency in cooperative tasks, and a variety of marriage cases. Hence, it is highly recommended that everyone make spending a big proportion of their time with friends, <u>rather than</u> being alone, their first priority.
369 words
Mahshad Samnejad: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)