

**121. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? A good sense of humor is one of the most important human qualities. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \*\*\***

It may seem that joking and making fun is a faculty peculiar to modern society and modern people. There is numerous evidence, however, showing that sense of humor has always been integral to human nature, two of which being cave paintings and stone inscriptions. Were I to decide whether good sense of humor is of significance, I would certainly affirm its great consequence, on a number of counts, two of which are as follows.

To begin with, life of every single individual, invariably and regardless of what age or era in which they lead it, is rife with complications and burdens. Hardly has anyone been known as having lived in utter and sheer joy, luck, and happiness each and every moment of their lives. Thus, perhaps, by natural evolution, human beings have developed the talent of making fun as an assistant to bear difficulties.

Another issue is pertinent to the nature of existence. Since the very essence of life has its root in nature and natural selection, those creatures who have realized that life is nothing but material, contingent existence caused by mere chance, and hence have understood that the ultimate reason of their being, if any, is integrally embodied in a "joke", so to speak, have been the ones who have enjoyed the highest level of intelligence. As a result, in natural selection, they were the ones who have remained to pass on genes they had inherited. That they have possessed one of the most important human characteristics, not to say the nucleus of it, is the reasonable conclusion. As a result, sense of humor plays a significant role as far as the life of human beings is concerned.

In light of these considerations, I subscribe to this idea that one of the pivotal, if not the very hub itself, of the human nature is witticism as well as the capability to amuse and be amused. Even further, I think that good sense of humor is vital inasmuch that we cannot conceive of doing without it.

377 words

Ghazal Keyhanfar: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

**122. Every generation of people is different in important ways. How is your generation different from your parents' generation? Which way of life do you think would be more satisfying to future generations? \***

Throughout history, human beings' lives have changed immensely since they inherently have a tendency to improve their way of living. A significant factor, which, by the passage of time, has led people's lives to more advanced ones is, without a doubt, the advent of technology. Although technology has vastly enhanced people's lifestyle, it has affected the world adversely as well. There are other important differences between former generations' lives and those of the generation who live today, three of which - that is - overpopulation, technological advancement, and the decline in social interactions are the most considerable ones.

The advent of such technologies as personal computers, cars, as well as airplanes is influential in today's lives. Once upon a time, people were obliged to travel by elementary means of transportation, which consumed a great deal of their time. Nowadays, not only can people travel faster by luxurious airplanes, but also they can communicate with their family or even check how the stock market is changing while they are up in the sky.

In my perspective, nowadays, the easier we can live, the more we lose the quality of truthfulness or being trustworthy. Former generations definitely lived more peaceful life and with great respect for one another. Family members gathered together, communicated and exchanged their experience or ideas through these gatherings. Today, because of the modern technology, sometimes children even tend to meet their parents from another room by means of computers and the Internet!

Another significant difference has to do with the population growth. As time passes, since medical treatments develop, people are able to live healthier and longer. As a result, population all around the world would increase, and as the result of overpopulation, living becomes harder. Parents should strive to work harder in order to live properly and extend their affluence. The result of such upcoming event might be the fights between diverse countries, which try to gain possession of more land to provide better service for their residents.

All in all, living in today's world is quite different from that of earlier generations. With having in mind all the negative changes that the world has undergone, I would absolutely think that the way my parents lived would be more satisfying to the future generations since it was filled with calmness and respect.

385 words

Shahriar Sefati: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

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

Since the year dot, human beings have been exploring various possibilities to foresee what the future is like. This has always been something of a mystery what the future brings about, and no one knows what it holds. It is incontrovertibly unmistakable that we are in the age of fast-track development of technology and science. Every fraction of a second passing by is pregnant with remarkable upheavals and mutations in every facet of life, and this breakneck pace of change from hour to hour makes it difficult for us to see what is coming in a day or so, let alone a century ahead. In my idea, the 22<sup>nd</sup> century will be both bleak and bright as far as technology is concerned.

Future will be at the mercy of technology, robots, and machines. Unhappily, there will be a great many jobs and positions, which will be made redundant by the juggernaut of technology and industrialization on the grounds that workers and employees will easily be superseded by machines and robots. State-of-the-art computers and electrical appliances will permeate every dimension of life to the extent that life will be stagnating without them. Technology will be at the expense of our personal relationships because we will barely rely on each other for assistance, as long as machines serve the purpose. Consequently, this will make negative inroads into our human values that will most likely result in the demise of relationships among people and even worse, it will make people feel alienated from one another.

Looking on the bright side of this spectacle, we wake up to this fact that it is not all gloom and doom about the future in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. In better words, advances in technology will also bring about some benefits. For instance, alongside the cutting-edge of medicine, which is heavily predicated on technology and science, we will be able to treat fatal diseases and find cures for the most stubborn remaining ones. We will also be able to travel to far-off lands and even other planets far easier than it is today. We will not be surprised if people travel to the moon for vacation. In addition, there will be far more amenities and conveniences for people living in the future, and thanks to technology, future students will be more competent and knowledgeable than present-day students.

In conclusion, the 22<sup>nd</sup> century will undergo dramatic changes. Technology is a double-edged sword that cuts both ways and will be the inevitable cornerstone of the future. The onus is on posterities to exploit the merits and do away with the demerits of technology for the good of their lives.

438 words

Akbari: TOEFL Instructor

**124. If you could make one important change in a school that you attended, what change would you make? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer. \*\***

One of the most critical periods in everyone's life is his or her years of education. It is such an influential factor/so influential a factor that it can afterwards determine the whole path of one's life. As a result, it would be my first priority to amend the education system if I was authorized to do so. As there are quite a few defects in the entire system, the changes would be applied on both schools and universities.

First of all, there should be lower time allocated by the students to school or university. Since students go through long hours of class attendance every day, they arrive home exhausted. The fatigue prevents them from accomplishing their assignments, as well as doing an extra activity, such as a sport, or a hobby. Additionally, students do not have sufficient time, due to being overloaded with lessons, to handle both their education and a part-time job; consequently, they are not able to acquire financial independence throughout their education. Therefore, certain unnecessary courses could be eliminated from the students' curriculum, namely 'Arabic', and substituted by useful optional courses, such as French or astronomy, which are more recreational rather than educational.

Furthermore, the teaching method in the whole education system should be modified. Currently, the students are not given the opportunity to participate enough in their learning process, as their mere role is to be the audience and to repeat utterly what is taught to them previously. Therefore, they are always withheld the ability to express themselves, which is substantial later in their career. The old system, which is totally obsolete in developed countries, must be essentially supplanted by an interactive teaching method, allowing the learners to contribute to their training.

Moreover, the segregation of boys and girls should be abolished. In Iran, mixed schools, in which both genders study together, are not permitted to be established. The segregation lasts twelve years, until these students enter the university. Hence, boys and girls are not given the chance to learn how to treat each other, causing them communication problems and bizarre behavior later in their social life.

To sum up, despite the great number of imperfections that exist in every part of the life of the young in my hometown, I would take measures to alter the education system, because of its extreme significance. If students have some time on their own, to create and convey their own novel ideas, as well as to manage their relationships, they will be more likely to develop a society consisting of insightful and prosperous members.

426 words

Mahshad Samnejad: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)



**125. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position. \*\***

As the world is going toward globalization rapidly, undoubtedly, communication is a capability, which is vital for everyone to enjoy in an excellent fashion. Hence, learning a foreign language, as the most important instrument for communicating, is of great significance. In this regard, some people believe that children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school. On the other hand, some people advocate learning a foreign language later. I, personally, subscribe to the former opinion due to several reasons, which are presented hereunder:

To begin with, children, in the primary grades of school, are completely unfamiliar with any sort of hardships which one might experience through his or her life. Additionally, they do not have worries in comparison with adults who are always struggling for a goal, whose accomplishment is a worrying issue. In addition, their minds are free from thoughts about various objects related to different aspects of today's tough life. Thus, children in this age are capable of learning any kind of material, and a foreign language is not an exception for them.

Secondly, children in this age, have "mind flexibility." I mean, their personality is in the shaping process. Moreover, their thoughts and perception from different features of life are not fixed yet. Accordingly, several issues could affect their attitude toward life. Learning a foreign language in this age has a great impact on children and would broaden their horizons in a positive way thanks to the fact that learning a global prevailing language will enable them to get familiar with other parts of the world as well as their home country.

Last but not least, children will get busy with different things in adolescence; therefore, they might not find enough time to spend on learning a foreign language when they get mature. Furthermore, if they find enough spare time, they can spend it on other activities such as doing sports, watching movies, hanging out, and reading books in various fields, to name but a few, rather than beginning to learn a language. Hence, by learning a foreign language as soon as possible, their capabilities will vary in quite a few segments, namely art, sport, science, as well as foreign languages.

To sum up, with all this taken into account, it seems much better for children to utilize their innate ability for learning new subjects, namely languages, as soon as they enter primary schools due to their "thirsty mind" and a great deal of spare time. I am pretty sure that, in the next few years, learning a foreign language will be obligatory for children in primary schools, due to the galloping phenomenon called globalization.

442 words

Arshan Samnezhad: Azad University

**126. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Television has had a mostly positive effect on society. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \*\***

Nowadays, as can be felt easily, the style of living has evolved thanks to the galloping rate of technology improvement in today's world. Everybody tends to get information by multimedia and the Internet rather than reading books. Given the circumstances, it is crystal clear that television has a conspicuous role in families as far as promoting the scope of knowledge in the society is concerned. It is, however, said that the effect of the prevalence of watching television is under question these days.

It is manifest that the programs of television in which deep thoughts and different points of views about a new subject are described can be beneficial in expanding the horizons of the members of a society. Moreover, watching television with family members can be mentioned as a blessing in disguise, especially in the hectic life style of today in which we are witnessing the demise of the fundamental values of traditional families, including spending time with family members to have a stronger relationship.

However, no one in their right mind disagrees with this statement that health conditions gradually deteriorating is one of the demerits of spending excessive time in front of the screen of television. Based on the latest studies carried on in the current decade, the rate of both mental and physical disorders is increasing incredibly. It means that the more time one spends on watching T.V, the more health problems our society will undergo. Furthermore, to have more amusing programs, movie producers prefer to use more violent scenes in their products, which leads to increasing the rate of criminals in the society. The other aspect to be considered is that, these days, T.V programs are more attractive by means of colors, energetic songs, and famous actors or actresses, distracting children from their main goal; that is, studying. Accordingly, they do not pay enough attention to do their assignments perfectly or learn a new thing in their leisure time.

To sum up, apart from the advantages of T.V programs, namely promoting the culture and awareness of societies, I myself believe that watching the programs shown on television not only can be to the detriment of the societies as a whole, but also can increase the rate of criminals in the current world.

376 words

Bitá Vaseghi

**127. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Teaching children has become hard because of cell phones, social networks, and online games. Give specific reasons for your position. \*\***

Undoubtedly, in our modern society, technology is promoting every single second so much so that it will become a requisite of the life of every human in the future. The more people adapt themselves to new technologies, the easier they will accomplish their goals, and as a result of which the more prosperous they will become in their professional life. Although technology has quite a few detrimental effects on our life, namely being so costly, decreasing beneficial interactions among people, and diminishing emotional relationships, it has facilitated our daily life in diverse aspects such as working, shopping, and teaching children, to name but a few. Hence, I believe that such new technologies as cell phones, social networks, and online games have promoted the level of learning among children.

First of all, statistics show that children belonging to social networks, namely Face book, Yahoo, and Badoo are more sociable as well as independent. Furthermore, some social networks are scientific, to which only educated individuals or students can subscribe, while the general public/ the layman cannot. In these kinds of networks, people have group discussions having to do with recent scientific issues so as to share their ideas, through which, indisputably, everyone can enhance his or her knowledge, or even children are able to get the answer to their questions.

In addition, teaching children has become easier by means of cell phones as well because children keep the company of their friends and teachers easier in the case of any problem. Moreover, parents are more aware of the location of their child more than before. They can also find them sooner, no matter where they are, and encourage them to do their assignments.

Last but not least, not only have online games made teaching children much easier, but it has given them motivation by which children's creativity and imagination have been boosted as well; therefore, if we had figured out the profound impact of online games on children's innovation earlier, we could have seen its unbelievable beneficial results on them sooner. It is indisputably axiomatic that online games help children's minds to flourish and compel them to find a new solution, as a result of which they can comprehend their lessons better.

In conclusion, based on what was already mentioned, the merits and demerits of technology highly depend on the way that we use it. Technology is one of the advantageous phenomena; we may use it in the worst way, nonetheless. In the case of teaching children, technology has made it convenient; hence, I, as a person having taught children for 5 years, recommend that teachers do not underestimate the effect of new technology to promote the knowledge level of their students.

450 words

Marzieh Noorani: Tarbiat Modares University (TMU)

**130. Some people want to have a job where they can make or do things with their hands. Other people prefer having a job where they can work with their heads and think. Which type of job do you prefer? \***

The era in which we are living is the time of dealing with quite a few modern technological devices. In such a world, there are many job opportunities, which need a broad spectrum of knowledge; however, some types of jobs merely need the person in charge to manipulate things even without enjoying specialties. Each one of us wants to get the best vocation satisfying us as far as our knowledge and specialties are concerned. I, for one, would rather work through thinking rather than manipulating things with my hands. This preference is due to several reasons, including improving one's creativity, increasing motivation, and learning new things.

To begin with, every situation could be a pleasurable one as long as new experiences are included. One can be completely contented with his or her occupation if he or she is allowed to bring new ideas and methods of doing their duties; accordingly, each employee looks for the best way of managing a situation. Although there may be some manipulating jobs which need creativity as an important part, still most of them are repetitive and as the result boring.

Another benefit of doing a creative job is that one is continuously searching everywhere in order to bring new ideas and improve the situation. There is a proverb expressing that, "Where there is a will, there is a way"; hence, a motivated person will do anything to get the job done in the most impressive manner.

The last but not the least reason is that one tries to brainstorm in some situations of his or her undertaking; In contrast, jobs that are done only by hands do not usually need new ideas. Consequently, learning new things from various sources is a considerable part of some creative occupations.

In conclusion, thought-provoking jobs are much more creative and interesting for the person doing them. Employees enjoying such positions not only have a great deal of motivation, but they also enthusiastically search in order to learn new things.

331 words

Pooyeh Asadi

**131. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Today, more people are travelling than ever before. Give specific reasons for your position. \*\***

Based on psychological findings, in our modern society, in which the majority of people work as a machine, everybody needs to refresh and recharge themselves as far as physical and mental aspects are concerned. I subscribe to this idea that nowadays people travel more than before because of the fact that it is one of the most effective ways by which we can boost our standard of living. Going on a trip more than before has to do with technology, promotion in people's attitudes, and financial affairs, to name but a few.

First of all, although going on a journey has its own risks, due to the promotion in technology, it has become more convenient compared to the past. In other words, one can travel thousands of miles in just several hours, an unthinkable trip in the past. In addition to high speed, safety and security are the other reasons to travel easily. The more technology progresses in diverse aspects, the easier and safer traveling becomes, and as a result of which, the more people will be persuaded to go on a journey.

Moreover, people's attitudes have been boosted by means of quite a few phenomena, namely education, keeping the company of others, and watching TV by which individuals have become familiar with other countries, cultures, places, and people. Therefore, not only are people interested in becoming familiar with other countries, but they tend to see these places nearly as well; therefore, they are motivate to experience them in person rather than taking a vicarious pleasure by watching them on a movie.

Last but not least, it is indisputably axiomatic that in spite of a great number of problems, recently, people obtain more money than before. In addition, the more people work, the more entertainment they need. Going on a trip helps refresh people's mind. Many psychologists, if not all, are of the opinion that nowadays people travel because they need to relinquish their stress as well as enhancing their tranquility so that they accomplish their goals in an excellent fashion, and also make more money than before.

In conclusion, based on what was already mentioned, although people are busier than before, not only do they go on a journey more than before, but going on travel is one of the integral schedules in their life because of the fact that traveling is much safer and easier; moreover, people are more enthusiastic to experience such new phenomena as other countries, people, cultures, and rituals; hence, I, as a tourist, recommend that people be considerably conscious of the decent results of traveling.

431 words

Marzieh Noorani: Tarbiat Modares University (TMU)

**132. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? We should pay attention to the opinions of famous people. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \*\***

Life is a burdensome path full of ups and downs. Human beings face nuisances every day; therefore, they may ask a friend for help or consultation, or even get back to the history in order to look for theories developed by famous people. I subscribe to the view that ideas of famous people are one of the most important sources that a person can get benefits from, according to the following reasons:

First, the one who looks for solutions in books written by the elites and the erudite people will be introduced to invaluable pieces of advice. By way of illustration, consider a person who is looking for some political advice, to take part in the next presidential election as a candidate. A friend can rarely lead him or her to the right path since it needs professional information; consequently, he or she should look for the answer in well-known books written by intellectuals.

Second, one may not trust the advice offered by a friend or family member in all situations. Those pieces of advice may be incomplete or wrong. In contrast, consultations taken from famous people are trustable, because the consultant is presumably well known and well-educated, and additionally, many other people have tried their opinions previously. As a result, the person may find it easy to trust the well-known adviser.

Third, have you ever tried to contact a friend to ask for help or advice? Sometimes it may be very difficult to find them since the today's "technologized" life/life which is dominated by technology has made everyone busy with/immersed in mechanical life. On the contrary, books are easily accessible. It has been demonstrated that books are much easier to gain access to due to the fact that they can be found in libraries, book stores, and even on the Internet, and furthermore, they are still trustable.

Statistically speaking, a vast majority of society members use books to find answers nowadays, which isn't a surprise according to the points I mentioned/elaborated on. I myself would rather read books in order that I can find the best possible answers, especially when the question is specialized and needs/calls for academic knowledge.

358 words

Gelare Malekpour

**133. Some people think that universities should provide graduates with the knowledge and skills needed in the workplace. Others think that the true function of a university should be to give access to knowledge for its own sake, regardless of whether the course is useful to an employer. Which opinion do you advocate? Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \***

The general opinion is that universities should have a functional atmosphere, where young people are prepared for their future jobs. Therefore, they should be oriented to improve individuals' skills. In contrast, there is another idea, which emphasizes training the students with a classified basic knowledge theoretically. It seems to me that providing a combination of knowledge and skill should be the target of universities.

Young people decide to go to university to globalize their professional resume for their future workplace. The more opportunity to access the experience during the university they have, the more successful in the job competition they become. While young people are ready to enter workplace, they have to present themselves as a machine, which can work in an excellent manner. However, a machine that memorizes a great number of scientific issues is not favored. Thus, universities should pay more attention to the vocational training to absorb more students to such places. Moreover, practical issues help change elusive knowledge to a permanent one.

However, the skills should not be separated from the knowledge. Undoubtedly, the initial focus of universities is to teach a well-organized knowledge to the students, which empowers them perfectly. They would be able to increase their professional qualities and a profound skill that is very rewarding. Thus, a person who deeply knows the knowledge pertinent to his or her work is prepared to challenge and solve the problems in workplace easily.

To sum up, a degree of both knowledge and skills help students to be prepared for their future. A profound knowledge never grows up without practical training or vice versa, the practical skills are worthless without having a relevant knowledge about it. Thus, I believe that they are complementary of each other to make an individual successful.

295 words

Dr. Azizi, Z.

**134. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Children should not have to work or help with household tasks; their only responsibility should be to study. \***

The quote “life is the greatest teacher” is unanimously agreed upon. Now, there is a controversy as to whether children should only study without any distraction or there should be a combination of household tasks and education in order for them to live an honorable life. Success is in growing in every aspect. On the contrary, being one-dimensional is strongly scorned. Hence, taking part in housework could be a start. Being involved in household tasks not only helps parents but also is a trick to make children responsible and prepares them for future life.

Children are part of a bigger community called family; thus, as a member of this lovely community, they must play their role. It is true that children’s most concerns should be studying, yet their role in the family cannot be ignored. Parents are not able to do everything on their own. Therefore, a little help from their children is appreciated. In addition to being advantageous, this is a great feeling to have a part in your own family.

Playing a part in family chores is an exercise for bigger responsibilities that emerge in life in the future. In childhood, it should be learned that it is impossible to run away from the ups and downs of life. With facing the hardships of life, it will be learnt to accept responsibilities involved in it. As it is obvious, this is a blessing in disguise which proves to be a stepping stone for their future purposes.

Last but not least, working at home, besides studying, makes children ready for future life. If it is started from childhood, they will learn how to live their life, while facing life problems teaches them the fact that life is not just cakes and ale. Conversely, it is taught that life is for greater goals and creates the feeling that they should be ready for future inconveniences, which are much more difficult than what happens in childhood.

Taking into consideration what was already mentioned, children's taking part in household work is strongly advised, for, besides being useful for the family, it makes children prepared for future responsibilities and importantly makes them ready for future life. Consequently, it could be concluded that studying and doing household tasks simultaneously is like “a pill which is bitter. Still, since the consequences are more important than a temporary discomfort, we swallow it.”

396 words

Sajjad Taghiye: Sharif University of Technology



**135. People recognize a difference between children and adults. What events (experiences or ceremonies) make a person an adult? Use specific reasons and examples to explain your answer.**

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One of the controversial questions which has occupied human mind for a long time has to do with the main and ultimate purpose of life. Most philosophers and psychologists believe that the aim of our lives is to achieve perfection. However, perfection does not have any exact definition. In fact, it is a wide realm, which includes quite a few concepts, one of which being maturity. Keeping this in mind, one interesting question that may come to one's mind is what makes us adult. There are a great number of factors, which contribute to becoming an adult; however, as far as I am concerned, traveling, and living independently have a consequential role in this regard. I have several reasons, being elaborated upon/explained hereunder.

First of all, there is a great merit with the Persian proverb which says, "For becoming mature, one must travel a lot." In fact, traveling is not only fun but also the best way for one to enrich their understanding from the world they live in. When one travels, they can know many people from different races and cultures. Therefore, they will be able to gain invaluable experiences, the very experiences which result in one's maturity and personality growth. A study conducted by psychologists shows that while encountering problems, a person who travels to other countries at least once a year, can handle the hardship in an appropriate way. This is mainly because of the fact that, thanks to experiences which they gain through traveling, such people gain a logical insight. Therefore, they are able to analyze a problem from different angles and consequently make the best decision in hard times.

In addition, living independently from their parents helps the youth become adult. Most of the young people do not know and care about the ups and downs of life. In fact, parents always do their best to provide their offspring with facilities. In such families, the youth do not have even a clue that how their parents make efforts to survive the hardships. As an example, in today's economic crisis, earning/ making a living and using it in an optimum way is an arduous task. However, the youth are not aware that how their parents are struggling to cope with their excessive demands. Keeping this in mind, if one lives independently, he or she will learn how to spend and save money appropriately. This is only one of its advantages. In fact, the major plus point is that one learns that they cannot always lean on/be dependent on others, but they have to confront their problems and try to solve them.

All in all, although there are quite a few events that make one an adult, as far as I am concerned, living independently and traveling to different places are of the utmost importance.

467 words

Lida Safarnejad: Amirkabir University of Technology

**136. If you were given some money, would you go on a vacation or would buy a car. Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice. \***

Early humans tried to satisfy/meet/address their needs such as clothes and foods, to name but two, by themselves. However, they gradually learned that it was not necessary to do so when they could trade goods with each other, which, in turn, was the dawn of the economic science. In fact, humans learned how they could exchange goods and products by means of money. They also learned to be provident; in other words, our ancestors learned that it was not necessary to spend all their earnings, but to save and invest it to gain more fortune. Following their way, this is why all of us think to find the best way to spend our money. Keeping this in mind, if I were to buy a car or take a vacation, I would unquestionably buy a car. I have some reasons, being explained/elaborated upon hereunder.

To begin with, I believe that buying a car is somehow an investment because of two reasons. First, if one buys a car, although at a lower price, he or she can sell it when they need money. On the other hand, if someone takes a vacation, he or she simply spends all their money and they never can get it back. Second, by using one's own car, a person can save quite a bit of money. The main reason is that they can use their car in some trips, and therefore avoid the expenses they bear because of the use of public transportation.

In addition, by taking a vacation instead of buying a car, one ruins their chance to take several vacations. In fact, by using their own car, one is able to travel more, and hence able to visit more places. Moreover, traveling by their own car, one can schedule their trip as they wish and not by the decision a tour leader makes. Many people are of the opinion that people who make decisions themselves about their trip and schedule their trip on their own will enjoy their journey more than the people who do otherwise.

In summary, by taking all this into account, I would prefer buying a car to taking a vacation. Because by doing so, one would not spend all their money out on taking a vacation for only a few days. Moreover, they could use their car to travel, and as a result could enjoy more than the situation where they have to fit themselves in a tourist agency scheduling.

409 words

Lida Safarnejad: Amirkabir University of Technology

**137. Choose one of the following transportation vehicles and explain why you think it has changed people's lives.**

- automobiles
- bicycles
- airplanes

**Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. \***

One of the most acclaimed works of Jules Vern is "Around the World in Eighty Days," which was a very inspiring and amazing adventure novel. I remember that I was extremely interested in this book when I was a child and had quite a few plans to travel around the world by trains, balloons, boats, and ships, the same as my hero, Mr. Fogg. In fact, the means of transportation he chose excited me so much. During human life evolution, transportation, as a fundamental requirement, has been a very influential aspect. Who can deny the role of the invention of the wheel on human life and civilization? Although all kinds of transportation vehicles have tremendously influenced our life in every period of time, I believe that the invention of airplane is the prime point of human history.

Scientists named our species Homo Sapience to emphasize a very important and bold characterization of our species, that is, curiosity. In fact, by the invention of aircraft, humankind could expand their territories to the sky, which not only satisfied their curiosity, but also was a very important step toward transportation improvement.

The first flight by humans was a tremendous adventure, which occurred after numerous defeats, so it kept alive the memory of the first flying men, Wright brothers. By modifying the aviation technology and creating new and more high-tech aircraft, people could observe the effect of this type of transportation in their real lives, namely to facilitate journeys, to transport more people in less time, and to help people after natural disasters, to name but a few. These are just a few advantages of using aircraft, and moreover they have an advanced and scientific role in such sciences as Geography and climate forecasting.

As it was mentioned above, one of the greatest merits of air transportation is acceleration of dispatching/sending off aid teams and transfer equipment to the stricken areas after any kind of disasters such as earthquake, tsunami, and flood. Just imagine/visualize in your mind how difficult it would be to aid the people in such catastrophes without any aircraft while the roads are massively damaged.

To sum up, air transportation and aviation industries have had a gigantic role in our today life in all aspects, that is to say, communication, finance, health systems, and entertainment. Therefore, I believe that if Mr. Fogg lived today, he would undoubtedly buy a two-engine airplane and gamble on going around the world in just eight days or maybe fewer.

413 words

Parisa Sahranavard: University of Tehran

**138. Some people believe that success in life comes from taking risks or chances. Others believe that success results from careful planning. In your opinion, what does success come from? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. \*\***

It is crystal clear that being successful is the ultimate goal of all human beings. Individuals go to schools, study their lessons, become literate, seek for an appropriate job, struggle to have the best performance in workplace, all because of an accessible goal—prosperity. Generally, within the path through prosperity, people are on a big dilemma, whether to travel on a long, regular, and safe road without fluctuation, or to go through a much shorter path with quite a few ups and downs. I, personally, subscribe to the latter way, according to numerous reasons, three of which are discussed hereunder.

First of all, by considering the biography of prosperous people, we easily distinguish quite a lot of chances and opportunities they utilized as well as countless tribulations they confronted. However, none of those hardships prevented them from being successful, as they just made the most out of their chances and took consecutive risks, regardless of the obstacles which may seemed disappointing at the beginning.

Secondly, it is proven that living a routine and monotonous life besides being careful about every single step is more likely to result in a normal life, which is at the same level of the majority of people in society, which is not what ambitious individuals look for. It is undeniable that being beyond the norm and leading a financially convenient life as well have a price which calls for one's courage for taking logical risks as well as one's capability of taking maximum advantage of probable chances.

Last but not least, our natural life is passing by with fixed and unchangeable regulations. Being familiar with these rules is not adequate for being successful, but rather how we can practically utilize these laws in an effective manner is of great significance. Trying hard parallel to taking reasonable risks in a suitable time, and eventually enjoying a successful life afterwards, is a natural law, and unquestionably enjoying the result of a law without meeting its requirements in a perfect fashion is impossible.

To sum up, there are several ways with quite a few features that could lead in enjoying prosperity. Nonetheless, trying hard, taking rational risks, using our opportunities in an efficient manner, and avoiding routine jobs which needs no particular competence are common among all of them.

381 words

Arshan Samnezhad: Azad University

**139. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? We should always tell the truth to our friends. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \***

Even though it might typically seem easier to conceal the truth and tell a lie instead, I, personally, believe that honesty always results in long-lasting relationships. Sometimes, in particular situations, telling a lie is unavoidable; nonetheless, intending to do so could cause some serious trouble in different situations. For instance, honesty would be replaced by an adverse atmosphere of unreliability, hurting friends' feelings; moreover, telling a lie is prohibited in many religions as well as in diverse cultures.

A person who is told a lie by a friend can excusably feel betrayed since telling a lie inadvertently sends a signal that one does not trust their friends. Consequently, how is it possible to regain trust? There is a famous saying which goes, "Many a white lie better than seditious truth." Such advice must be taken into account meticulously. Sometimes lying so as to prevent hurting others' feelings is a clever choice; nevertheless, one must clearly have in mind that such behavior should not become a daily routine. In fact, revealing the truth might even be a wiser idea.

Honesty is a significant feature of relationships such as marriage. Married people should strive to tell the truth to each other, even though they might frequently have secrets to hide from their partner. The key point is that one is not always obliged to tell the truth. Most of the times, hiding the reality by saying nothing is more intelligent. This is the kind of attitude that most of the politicians use in order to save their precious goals and to reconcile with other nations or enemies. In such relationships as marriage, not only should everyone train themselves not to fabricate false information, but such quality is essential in typical friendships as well. All in all, truthfulness is necessary for maintaining a relationship of any kind.

Being honest has always been recommended in different religions, for it is one of the greatest attributes an individual might demonstrate. Throughout history, prophets have constantly/frequently encouraged people to tell the truth, even if the results were against them. Moreover, telling a lie has always been amongst the most inhibited sins. In addition to that, diverse cultures all around the world have emphasized the necessity of being righteous as well as trustworthy. These characteristics are classified among the most important aspects of every nation, which will eventually contribute to greater relations between them.

In summary, despite the fact that telling a lie might be a more convenient and easier approach than telling the truth, honesty is an invaluable feature, which enables us to cultivate/establish/form/foster closer relationships based on righteousness. Although the type of the relationship might vary from a regular one to that between high-ranking officials of a country, the significance of developing ethical attributes like honesty in ourselves should not be easily ignored.

468 words

Shahriar Sefati: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

**140. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The greatness of individuals can be decided only by those who live after them, not by their contemporaries. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \*\***

The author asserts that the greatness of noble people is never understood and appreciated by their contemporaries, and only the people who live years after them will perceive it. Although, in some situations, this statement is true, I think it is not always the case. Comprehending and appreciating one's greatness happens when people thoroughly understand his or her accomplishments whether or not they are alive. This process may take years and decades. Because of that, in some cases, the greatness of noble people was praised after their death.

In the medieval times, the Church was the dominant institution of the society, and people believed in everything that the religious leaders told them to. Challenging those beliefs and traditions was an illegitimate action and could have resulted in severe punishments. At that time, Galileo, one of the greatest scientists, was the first person to propose that the Earth is not the center of the universe, rather it rotates around the Sun. His unorthodox beliefs contradicted those of the Church. Therefore, people of his time were not able to understand his ideas. Although Galileo deserved great admiration, he was pronounced as a criminal who tried to ignore religious beliefs. As a result of his unorthodox claims, he was sentenced to life in prison.

However, there were cases in which the contemporaries were knowledgeable enough to understand great men's achievements. For instance, in the middle of the 18th century, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Austrian composer and pianist, was widely appreciated for his talent and his music by his contemporaries and famous musicians of his time. Until now, Mozart has been known as one of the greatest, most influential composers in the history.

Nowadays, with an enormous progression in technology, people can effortlessly have access to such facilities as social networks and publications. Hence, their mind is more open than before, and their knowledge is more advanced than their predecessors. Consequently, people can straightforwardly present their ideas. Therefore, it is less likely that the author's assertion is valid in the new generation. Today, there are so many examples of noble people who have been praised by their contemporaries, one of whom is Steve Jobs, American inventor and founder of Apple Inc., whose influential career and innovations in the technology and music industries have always been praised by his contemporaries. He also made Apple Inc. the most popular computer-based corporation in the world.

In conclusion, we can see that some instances in history cannot prove that noble people are taken for granted, and that the given statement does not happen in the present world, even though this assertion was true in some earlier times, when there were some cases that the greatness of noble people was praised posthumously. However, there were also many great people who had been appreciated by their contemporaries, and nowadays, people have/enjoy enough knowledge to understand and appreciate one's greatness.

478 word

Setare Sarachi: Azad University

**141. A gift (such as a soccer ball, a camera, or an animal) can contribute to a child's development. What gift would you give to help a child develop? Why? Use reasons and specific examples to support your choice. \*\*\***

Children have different tastes and like different things. A gift that is suitable for one child might not be appropriate for another one. However, it is often the amount of thought that is put into a gift that is most appreciated. It is quite disappointing when the gift sent is clearly not needed by the recipient, and is not unique in any way. Were I to give a present to a child, I would give a chess set to him or her. The most desirable things for children are games and the things which they can play with. Nonetheless, I believe that chess is one of the most advantageous games of all time. Playing chess will help a child to get familiar with logical thinking, science of deduction, and rationality. Moreover, playing chess can help children understand who they are and what their abilities and potentials are. In my opinion, life and chess are so much alike; as a matter of fact, life is an ultimate game that should be played, and playing chess will teach children so much about it and its rules.

Chess improves child concentration, which means they are focused on only one main goal, which is to checkmate and become the victor. Next, chess requires some understanding of logical strategy and it develops scientific way of thinking. In other words, children generate numerous variations in their mind while playing. They explore new ideas, try to predict their outcomes and interpret surprising revelations. They decide on a hypothesis; then they make their move and test it. Furthermore, chess involves an infinite number of calculations that include anything from counting the number of attackers and defenders in the event of a simple exchange to calculating lengthy continuations.

Chess promotes imagination and creativity; it encourages a child to be inventive. There is an indefinite number of beautiful combinations in chess yet to be constructed. In addition, chess inspires self-motivation. Depending on personality, it encourages the search of the best move, the best plan, and the most beautiful continuation out of endless possibilities. It motivates the everlasting aim towards progress, always steering to ignite the flame of victory. All in all, chess is a test of patience, nerves, willpower, and concentration. Thus, it enhances children's ability to interact with other people and tests their sportsmanship in a competitive environment.

Indeed, the skills chess offers to those who play it are gold mines. As a matter of fact, it teaches faithful players how to approach life. It teaches people having dilemmas that there is more than one answer to a problem. With this in mind, while your adversary is looking at the issue through a single point, you as the great chess player can take a step back and look at the picture through many points. Chess teaches independence. Children are forced to make important decisions influenced only by their own judgment. It also develops the capability to predict and foresee consequences of actions. It teaches children to look both ways before crossing the street.

Chess helps any human being to acquire exact methods of thinking. Numerous studies have proven that kids obtain a higher reading level, math level and a greater overall learning ability as a result of playing chess. For all those reasons stated/mentioned above and more, kids playing chess do better at school and therefore have a better chance to succeed in life. Everybody prefers to learn something while playing rather than to learn it formally. Above all, chess is fun! Chess is not just another one of those board games. No chess game ever repeats itself, which means you create more and more new ideas in each game. Thus, it never gets boring. Children always have so much to look forward to. In every game, they are the general of an army and they alone decide the destiny of their soldiers. They can sacrifice them, trade them, pin them, fork them, lose them, defend them, or order them to break through any barriers and surround the enemy king.

672 words

Keyhan Khodjasteh

**142. Compare and contrast knowledge gained through books and knowledge acquired by experience. Which is more important? Why? \*\*\***

Knowledge, no matter what its source may be, when applied to the daily complications and troublesome tasks, can be of valuable assistance to the thinking human. However, the efficiency and the extent to which it can gain ground and unravel the mysteries are bound up with several factors, a critical one of which is the source. Based on the fashion through which knowledge is gained, its sources can be categorized into two principal classes: literature and experience.

In today's hectic life, time can be of indescribable value to human beings. Often generated through extensive amounts of endeavor, literary knowledge has an organized nature and utilizes a methodical approach to the demonstration of information. In contrast, knowledge obtained by means of experience is invariably constructed upon trial and error, making it time-consuming and exhausting, whereas, thanks to its structured characteristics, knowledge acquired via books can save a significant amount of time.

Although being frustrating and created through a prolonged process, empirical knowledge has its exclusive superiority. It is known through common sense that any action performed in reality has a much more profound impact on human beings compared to when it is solely read about. Scientifically speaking, the amount that an experience influences human brain revolves around how dramatic it is. Acquiring knowledge through books, no matter how thorough, is at most capable of creating a defective simulation of the task, let alone the actual situation.

No matter how lengthy an experience can be, it should be kept in mind that even a book, which is considered a convenient and effortless source of knowledge at hand, is created as a consequence of extended intellectual and laborious work at some point in history. Owing to what was discussed above, I stand up for experiential knowledge, claiming that it is definitely the most pivotal source of knowledge and even bestowing experience the privilege to be known as the mother of all sources.

318 words

Behrooz Amirzadeh: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)



**143. If you were given the authority, what would you do to improve your hometown? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer. \*\***

Someone who is in charge of a mayor's office/municipality and its entire staff is in a really crucial situation. He or she controls the whole city, constructions, and employees, to name but a few. A responsible mayor office can improve the whole city in many aspects, but unfortunately choosing an appropriate person for this job happens rarely since selecting the right person is mostly political, not logical. I think one can make more important changes while he or she is in office as a mayor; therefore, I would rather continue my article with the conception of me as a mayor, to have more abilities.

As I mentioned before, a mayor has huge responsibilities to be carried out, many of which can boost the whole city; thus, if I had the opportunity to be the mayor of my town, I would make enormous changes in the whole system, namely rebuilding old structures, building some places for the youth, and using students as part-time employees.

To illustrate my point, I should explain how to use students' capacity. Young students whose ages are between 13 and 17 have too much free time that they spend playing video games, or even waste it. Hence, I, as the mayor of my town would hire them to work for the mayor office. They are not expected to do difficult jobs; still, they can help in many situations such as planting flowers in boulevards and beside streets or installing banners. It not only helps the mayor office to pay less, but also improves the students' skills.

Additionally, another important thing that can be done by a mayor is to build different places for different personalities and ages. I live in a small city. Consequently, whenever my friends and I decide to go somewhere, we face a big problem: 'WHERE TO GO?' There is no place we may find interesting. I can see the youth spending their whole time walking in sidewalks and talking to one another, which is the good side, though. Many may find more dangerous funs like taking drugs. Accordingly, a place is needed for the youth in which they can spend their spare time. Somewhere like a park to do some "Parkour" or skating. Likewise, somewhere they can have fun with each other without the fear of being arrested by police simply because their group is a mixture of girls and boys.

There are so many changes that I like to see in my hometown, but since no one takes it serious, I am doubtful whether it will ever come true. Moreover, one who wants to make changes shall never forget this short story apparently narrated by ....: 'When I was a child, I wanted to change the world, when I became a young man I decided to change my country. In middle ages, I became determined to change my hometown, but a short time before my death, I realized that if I want to change the world, I must change myself first. Alas, it was too late.'

507 words

Gelare Malekpour

**144. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People should read only those books that are about real events, real people, and established facts. Use specific reasons and details to support your opinion. \*\***

Undoubtedly, reading books is useful for people since one's horizons will be broadened by the knowledge gained from the material of books. In this regard, some people advocate reading books only about real people, real events, and established facts. However, I, personally, disagree with this opinion and subscribe to reading different books with various subjects due to quite a few reasons, two of which are discussed hereunder:

To begin with, it is crystal clear that creativity has played a magnificent role in humans' improvement. The level of creativity differs from person to person and depends on several factors, namely one's intelligence, opinion, enjoyments, maturity level, and lifestyle, to name but a few; nevertheless, creativity also can be inspired from hypothetical ideas which are elaborated upon in unreal books rather than the real ones. To illustrate, Jules Verne, who was a French author and pioneered the science fiction genre, wrote two brilliant books—that is—A Trip to the Moon, and Journey to the Center of the Earth, which accelerated scientific creativity about astronomy in general and plan to have a trip to the moon in particular in an excellent fashion.

Secondly, besides science, unreal books in other fields can also provide the readers with such an imagination, which results in having a more flexible mind so that these readers can find creative solutions to complicated problems that they confront during life. I mean, reading imaginary material empowers imagination so much so that one can automatically consider subsequent consequences of the action that he or she takes toward possible difficulties.

All in all, with all this taken into account, it can be concluded that the material of unreal books acts as a supplement for real books which provide us with real experiences as well as practical solutions in real circumstances. Moreover, reading unreal books, parallel to real books, is an efficient way to enhance our creativity and imagination as well as our ability to deal with hardships. Thus, it seems better to read both real and unreal books and utilize their tips in an effective manner.

379 words

Arshan Samnezhad: Azad University

**145. 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. \***

It is crystal clear that communication is one of the most important and useful skills that people should learn and use throughout their life, but it does not mean that they should spend all their time to communicate with others. In other words, sometimes people need to be alone in order to gain different important skills. Therefore, personally, I believe that solitude is an appropriate mood that is necessary in some parts of human beings' life and can teach a person worthy of remark lessons that no one can teach. There are a great number of reasons to prove this idea, three of which are as follows/will follow: first, having the ability to think better when they are alone; second, being able to concentrate on issues in their privacy, and having more time to pursue their schedule when they are solitude.

First of all, the first advantage of solitude is that people can think well when they are alone. Although, by joining a group, they can benefit from other members' ideas, experiences, and attitude, to name but a few, they find more unique and decent ideas on loneliness. As statistics show, more than 90 percent of ideas which led to inventions came through the inventors' brains when they were alone. Therefore, it shows that solitude can help people's brain to be more dynamic, active, and creative.

Secondly, the less communication people have, the more concentration they will have on issues and problems. Although communications help one to develop and improve his or her social skills, they will not be able to concentrate because of the busy mind. In other words, by having a great number of friends, people should concentrate on the quality of these relationships, and as the result of which they will not have enough energy and concentration for other important issues.

Finally, solitude helps human beings to have more time to complete his or her plans and reach their goals. Put differently, the fewer friends that people have, the more time they need to pursue their schedule. Therefore, they can develop their skills in quite a few fields—namely in musical instruments, physical exercise, as well as academic abilities such as writing and reading, to name but a few. By doing so, they find the required motivation in a progressive way and will develop their skills during their life. Moreover, by having more time, people can organize to rest appropriately, which helps them to have more energy for future work/tasks.

In conclusion, although people may find themselves emotionally vulnerable when they are alone, there are a great number of advantages on solitariness, show people the way toward success if it is used in an appropriate and decent manner.

450 words

Arman Dastpak: Iran University of Science and Technology (IUST)

**146. 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. \*\***

Since travelling through time is an exciting but quite inaccessible wish everyone makes, it is hard to decide when and where to go in the past, if possible. There have been quite a few eras full of glory, happiness, and success during the presence of humans on earth that cannot be missed. Seeing the newly drawn portrait of "Mona Lisa" and asking "Leonardo Da Vinci" about the secret of her smile, watching one of Shakespeare's plays with its playwright, walking across Persepolis in the zenith of its glory and significance, and even being in the middle of the great revolution of France are all scenes I do not want to miss. Yet, if my time machine has enough "fuel" for just one voyage, I would prefer to travel to Ancient Egypt.

To begin with, my main motivation for choosing ancient times is that life seems to be simpler back then. People were more warm-blooded, more kind-hearted, and happier with their lives. As time went by, human mind and their way of living grew more complex, and subsequently, lies, untruthfulness, and other social evils became more complicated, and so did distinguishing the innocent from the criminal. That is one reason why I prefer to live in older times.

Among all ancient nations, Egyptians seem to be the most mysterious ones. A large number of secrets as well as pharaohs lie down peacefully in the heart of pyramids, waiting for some day to be revealed. Isn't it exciting to uncover the one-thousand-year-old concealed truth or witness great historical happenings?

Obviously, there were not just Pharaohs and laborers enslaved to construct pyramids in the ancient Egypt. In fact, Egyptians made a considerable progress in plenty of scientific fields. They were one of the earliest humans who invented a writing language, namely hieroglyph, and also the inventors of papyri to write on. Moreover, astronomy and geography improved substantially due to river Nile floods, and the necessity to control them. There have been also proficient physicians in that time and traces of rudimentary surgeries are found on ancient Egyptian skeletons. All these human masterpieces are worth witnessing.

Were I able to travel through time, I would choose ancient Egypt to visit, not because it is the place and time I most wanted to live in, but because I think it is the place which gathered most of the things I always wanted to see in a travel to the past, including magic, mystery, science and old-time technology.

411 words

Kiana Moghimi: Iran University of Science and Technology

**147. A nation should require all of its students to study the same national curriculum until they enter college. Write a response in which you discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with the claim. In developing and supporting your position, be sure to address the most compelling reasons and/or examples that could be used to challenge your position. \*\***

Quite a few days ago, I read a quote from/by Calvin Coolidge (the 30<sup>th</sup> U.S. President), and I am quoting here, "The world is full of educated derelicts." He understood this bitter fact that there is an impediment in the development of human societies today, which has to do with going through the same curriculum for students who have different talents and abilities. I am in his side. Hence, I think the same national curriculum is to the detriment of those whose main flair is not studying. Why should they do something that seems absurd to them?

To begin with, I strongly believe that every single person is born to do one special task better than any other one in the world. With this in mind, individuals pretend to go to schools in order to have that special talent burgeoned, whereas the national curriculum will treat with all of those potentially awesome pupils like a machine that have to learn certain courses until a certain time, which is nothing but wasting humans' precious resources.

The national curriculum not only kills a great number of talents among young students, but also it affects the nation's developmental plan so much so that we can recognize different outcomes among different countries in which more flexible curriculum leads to more inventions in diverse fields. Let's consider two adjacent countries with almost the same resources: South and North Korea. In the former, the curriculum is much more flexible than that in the latter, and we can see its consequences, namely Hyundai, Samsung, LG, and KIA, to name but a few which are all lending credence to the effectiveness of free learning atmosphere in South Korea. Undoubtedly, a vast majority of managers, engineers, and technicians of the abovementioned huge companies are upshot of domestic schools in which nobody is forced to do what is against his or her "inborn-mission."

In addition to developmental defects that a rigid curriculum has on the country, there is a huge question mark: who is qualified to design a national curriculum for everyone in the country? It is logically impossible. Different places, various local cultures, and antithetical regional equipment make it difficult and almost impossible, even for those adept committees, to design "one-for-all" plan for millions of people. On the other hand, designing a flexible plan, which is based on pupil's both strengths and weaknesses is more specific, so it could be managed easier in his or her school by their advisors. Moreover, a flexible plan can guide every single student to a point that they and their families believe can be more helpful for the youngster.

Apart from being practically impossible for a nation-wide curriculum to be designed in a perfect manner, I believe that college is too late for taking the first steps of specification. The efficient educational system should do it earlier and let the students use their fresh mind in the fascinating world of what is interesting for them. Additionally, by having an efficient curriculum, there is little need for punitive actions against students, because they really love what they are studying and they do not have to pretend they like the curriculum.

To sum up, apart from what was mentioned above, there are several reasons that make me subscribe to the idea of a flexible curriculum, in which we can culminate in the performance of each society to such a paramount level that each individual learns what he or she is enamored with. So, who wants to stymie our access to that "utopia?"

587 words

Hamed Arabzade: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

**148. 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 zenith 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 one another, improving their social skills, and, the most important of them finding their greatest talent in life are the most noticeable ones.

Human beings are social creatures and need to socialize for their evolution. Social dynamics are like fuel for human "moral engine." In college, one can find lifetime friends, who can act as a buttress 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 simulation of the real world in which students can practice 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 cover sports, art, and many other fields. Enthusiastic about success, a student can try many of them and unearth his or her talent, nurture 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 thanks to being cognizant of his dormant talent, 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)

**151. Holidays honor people or events. If you could create a new holiday, what person or event would it honor, and how would you want people to celebrate it? \*\*\***

Were I given the opportunity to appoint a certain day as an Iranian national holiday to honor the greatness of a man or woman, I would undoubtedly opt for the very day on which Dr. Zarif, incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran, was born. I believe that he is a great man of remarkable disposition, who, taking the biggest step in bringing back peace to his country, deserves to be introduced to future generations of his country as the “father of international ties”.

To begin with, Dr. Zarif, a well-educated man, managing the given critical juncture – the result of previous conjunctures – of his time in a competent manner, not only rescued his country from an imminent collapse, but also changed the Iranian international reputation for the better. Closely watching any disturbances that would derail the negotiations, he managed to achieve the desirable outcomes in spite of all the difficulties, resulting in lifting a series of prolonged, unfair sanctions which were to collapse the life most people of his country were leading. Hence, I believe that he deserves to be revered as a national hero, and on this very day, it would be a profitable act for people to celebrate the outcomes of his great affairs, that is, better life circumstances as well as their being in peace with other countries. On this holiday, “once-believed-to-be-appalling” people could admire their hero by carrying white flags or releasing “doves” all around the country as a peace-resembling symbol, which would also depict their loyalty to his beliefs.

Furthermore, enjoying a broad spectrum of notable characteristics—including perseverance, eligibility, and competency, to name but a few—the single-minded minister should be introduced as a role model to descendants. Determined to achieve the desired results, the patriotic minister did not hesitate to sacrifice himself, as well as his crew, for the future of his country. Accordingly, the self-possessed minister, despite his delicate constitution, managed all the disagreements even in most controversial situations. As one of my professors once said, and I am quoting, “We, Iranian people, are more instigated by ‘passion’ than ‘logic’.” With that in mind, managing a polite smile through the whole negotiation process, meanwhile fighting for his people’s rights and future, he implicitly taught his compatriots a great lesson, that is, in order for us to achieve a better future, we are to revolutionize our conventional manners. Therefore, in order for people to celebrate this special day, they could re-evaluate the principles mastering their conduct, and take an oath to fight for better futures.

All in all, taking into account all the above-mentioned reasons and many others, Dr. Zarif, Iranian minister of foreign affairs, deserves to be revered as a national hero, as he took a remarkably huge step to improve the life that future generations will live in his country. What would our future be like if he, the most competent person for the crucial job, simply “was not in the right place at the right time”?

496 words

Marjan Sadeghi: Shahid Beheshti University

**152. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Telephone has greater influence on people's lives than television has. Give specific reasons to support your position. \*\***

Since the dawn of humanity, quite a few inventions have not only changed people's lifestyle but also brought them many advantages. Among these inventions, some of them are quite controversial such as television and telephone, to name but two. While so many people attribute a greater value to the telephone in terms of asserting an impact on one's life, personally, I have a penchant for the television. This is because of the provision of a time for family gatherings, an efficient medium of news, and a bulk of interesting information, to name but a few.

Nowadays, the hectic life every single one of us is living - which is a result of financial pressures and occupational stresses - as well as some "solituting" technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet, distracts one from spending some invaluable time with his or her family. The television, with the amusing programs which it provides, gives families a chance to spend some time together, share laughter, and release their daily dose of modern life stress. On the contrary, I believe that the telephone not only is unable to provide us with such chances, but sends us deeper into isolation. It deprives us of visiting our friends and family members face to face simply because we can give them a call, which is soulless and dull.

Second, the television provides one with the ability of instantly being aware of what is happening all over the globe. Quite a handful of news channels provide people with the latest news; furthermore, they can warn them to take vital measures in order to save their lives in case of a catastrophic incident such as a flood, a tornado, and so many other natural disasters. To illuminate this point, let me provide a personal experience. When I was a child, an earthquake hit some northern regions of the city where I lived, while I was watching a television show with my family. Suddenly, the show was stopped and the channel switched into breaking news, anticipating a probable earthquake in Tehran - the city I lived in. Hours later, the earthquake stroke Tehran, damaging no one, thanks to the blessing of television news. This is virtually impossible through the use of the telephone.

Last but not least, there are a great number of channels allocated to different scientific, artistic, and cultural materials. One - who is thirsty of knowledge - by watching these kinds of programs, can achieve a better understanding of his or her social and cultural milieu. For example, a person who wants to acquire a new language, by watching foreign language channels, can fulfill his or her desire. Furthermore, children can learn quite a few things and improve their social skills by doing so. These learning opportunities are the positive influences of making use of the television rather than the telephone.

In conclusion, with all the aforementioned arguments taken into account, I believe that the beneficial and constructive impacts of the television outweigh those of the telephone in the ways they contribute to human life. Allocating some time to one's family in addition to conveying a great deal of data and news are of greatest importance, which cannot be provided by the telephone.

536 words

Hakhamanesh Mansoorzare: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)



**153. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Should one continue his or her longtime friendship with a friend, even if that person does the things that he or she does not like? \*\***

Friendship is like an essence to humans' monotonous life, which brings them joy and laughter as well as sadness and depression. Although some people believe that maintaining a friendship and getting along with a person whom one knows for a long time is necessary, whether his or her attitude is totally acceptable or not, I, personally, believe that one should end his or her friendship with one whose manner is annoying. Achieving peace of mind and having a chance to find a better friend in addition to being constantly inspired by one's friends are the reasons that I believe so.

First of all, being calm and having a mind full of peace are such priceless gifts that everyone struggles to achieve in his or her life, which can be partially acquired through accompanying a good friend. One who has a friend whose attitude is always in a pleasant way can easily be relived from the preoccupations of the hectic life he or she lives. They can spend some time with their friend, share their happiness, talk about their lives, and have a great deal of joy. On the contrary, being friend with a person who acts in a way that one does not approve of results in anger, tension, and anxiety, to name but a few. To further illustrate this point, let me provide an example. Suppose that one - who is desperate of all the job tensions and conflicts - decides to meet a friend in order to become relaxed. It is easily imaginable that what would happen if that friend's misconducts add up to his anger, he may even burst out of rage. Thus, one's friend should bring peace of mind with him- or herself.

Next, there is a Persian proverb that states, "All human beings are inevitably impacted by their peers, whom they spend time with." This astute proverb is the cornerstone of my second argument. Every single person spends a considerable amount of time with his or her friends, and this results in a mutual influence on one's attitude and manner. Consequently, if one allocates his or her invaluable time to spend with a friend who has a favorable attitude, he or she can expect acquiring those good qualities. However, if one's friend does not act in a pleasant way, one will inevitably find him- or herself plagued/afflicted with those attitudes.

Last but not least, "time flies by" and with this constraint in mind, one who spends his or her time in the most beneficial way in general and with the most beneficial friends in particular can be considered successful. In other words, one can spend his or time with a limited number of people, and the road to triumph calls for spending that time with the best ones. As a result, one should stop meeting his or her annoying friends, and instead, look for the people who not only are more similar to him or her, but also have a great, positive, and perpetuating influence on them. An author, whose name eludes me at the moment, says "people will judge you according to your friends." This quote also implies the importance of making better friends and ending one's friendship with those friends whose behavior annoys them.

In conclusion, with all the aforementioned arguments taken into account, I have a penchant for leaving annoying friends, despite the fact that one has had a relationship with them for a considerable amount of time. Being relived from stress, being inspired by people with a better manner, and finding a chance for meeting people with a better attitude, from my vantage point, are the most precious advantages that outweigh the merits of continuing that old friendship. So let's give up on those annoying "friends" and go out and look for one who improves us in as many ways as possible.

641 words

Hakhamanesh Mansoorzare: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

## 9.4 Writing Samples with Plans

154. Some people prefer to eat at food stands or restaurant. Other people prefer to prepare and eat food at home. Which do you prefer? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer. \*\*

Home+		Restaurant-
+Fresh nutrients, ST +more appetite	health	-Fat: obesity -cooking ways: illnesses like cancer -frying with decayed oil
+Saving, EX	costs	-more expensive -extra cost in expenditure
+traditional foods + various types of foods + even make new foods with regard to everyone's appetite	Food diversity	+fun if marginally -exhausting if all the time - repetitious dishes

In the last century, by the advent of ~~fast-food~~ fast food and various types of sandwiches, the manner of eating food/eating habits has been entirely altered among all of the people ~~in~~ all around the world. Although the advantages of eating food whether in a restaurant or at home have always been ~~always~~ a moot point, I, personally, prefer to eat at home due to some sound reasons~~-. In my opinion,~~ three of which—that is—health, less costs, and diversity of foods are the most significant ones.

To begin with, health is the most important issue for everybody in ~~everywhere~~ every place. Eating the food which is prepared with fresh and healthy nutrients at home brings about an energetic and healthy body for a person. Conversely, in a restaurant, the foods with high fat—which are almost fried with decayed oil—will cause obesity, and worse than obesity, such foods probably will bring dangerous illnesses such as digestive cancers. The scientific investigations on the selected individuals who eat ~~fast-foods~~ assert that the probability of cancer among these individuals is extremely high. Therefore, eating food at home not only ~~brings about~~ guarantees a healthy body but also prevents dangerous deadly diseases.

Secondly, providing food is the major part of life expenditures. Hence, decreasing the costs of providing food for a person will help ~~to him or her to~~ have more savings. It is obvious that preparing food at home is less expensive than eating food in a restaurant. For example, the price of ~~the a~~ hamburger which is made in a restaurant is twice ~~of the cost of~~ the one which is prepared at home. Thus, eating food at home would be rational for the individual who wants to both reduce costs and have more savings.

Last but not least, diversity of foods and various dishes ~~decrease~~ increase appetite in all the people. Eating food in a restaurant with relatives or friends would be appealing~~-, but~~ however, if it becomes routine, it ~~would~~ will be exhausting due to repetitious dishes. Restaurants chiefly do not have

diversity in kinds of food, especially traditional ~~foods~~dishes. In contrast, a person at home not only can prepare different kinds of foods—especially traditional ones—but also can make a new food by mixing different kinds of nutrients with regard to his or her appetite. Accordingly, eating food at home will never be boring, rather it would be very interesting to have a large variety of foods, which would increase appetite of all members of every family.

In conclusion, by taking into account all the above reasons, I believe that preparing and eating food at home will be ~~more beneficial for health~~, less costly, more beneficial for health, and more interesting in diversity of dishes. With this in mind, no one can deny the advantages of “home foods” in comparison with the “non-home foods.”

461 words

Leila Nikdel: Shahid Beheshti University

155. Some people enjoy change, and they look forward to new experiences. Others like their lives to stay the same, and they do not change their usual habits. Compare these two approaches to life. Which approach do you prefer? Explain why. \*\*\*

Change++-		Stability --+
+Discovering new knowledge, science, etc. +Keep pace with the world	Development	-Less innovation -Being left behind others
+Gain more experience +Higher Social status: the elites of the society +Earn more money	Life fruition	-Mediocre position +Stable position +More security
+Positive attitude (feeling that u r boosting your life condition) +Happy +Exciting –challenging (adventurous) -Hardship- adversity (ups and down )	Feeling	-Boring -Feeling of nihilism +Safety - comfort

There is a famous proverb mentioning that “the world is so big that it includes all kinds of ~~men~~ humans”; that is, every human has ~~its~~ his or her own preferences attitudes and attitudes preferences toward life. While many people searching for changes, there are other people who firmly stick to their current position and possessions. However, taking the proposed matter into closer consideration, leads us to apprehending how pivotal the role of change is ~~pivotal~~ through human development, both socially and individually. There are manifold reasons ~~to for~~ this claim, among ~~of~~ which, development, life ~~fruition~~ achievements, and one’s feeling concerning life, are the most significant ones.

To begin with, since the dawn of humanity, it was the sense of modifying ~~causing-propelled~~ prehistoric people to abandon their caves in order to discover the new aspects of life, resulting ~~to in~~ the most sophisticated and technologic world so far. In addition, all scientific breakthroughs concerning medical care, ~~and~~ astronomy, to name but ~~a few two~~, ~~that which~~ straightly affect people’s life are the ~~consequences-outcome~~ of those men seeking change. Thus, ~~It-it~~ is controvertibly axiomatic that had humans not followed their sense of change, we could not have enjoyed all the privileges of today’s life. Moreover, time is marching relentlessly, ~~and~~ following that technology is advancing at a galloping rate. One, therefore, should keep pace with the world;

otherwise, he or she will be left behind of the world. As can be seen from the abovementioned facts pointed out, looking forward to change is of great necessity for the advancement of every society.

Secondly, through making change to any facet of life, one can gain invaluable things, namely experience, a high status-career, and wealth, to name but a handful. For instance, when one changes her or his job, ~~he~~ they learn new skills, or when one immigrates to other countries in order to change his or her country, they acquire a great deal of knowledge about other cultures. What is more, in each society, all elites are those wanting to go far beyond the daily routines; as a case in point, ~~The~~ the Beatles, a renowned Rock Band, although young and novice when they entered the music world, they ~~have become~~ became the most influential band in the ~~annal~~ annals of rock, owing to the fact that they ~~make~~ made alteration to the conventional style of that time (~~those of that time~~). Hence, to obtain a special position in society, one should take risks and go beyond conventionality; nonetheless, some refute this fact maintaining that they prefer a mediocre position, ~~instead which is,~~ in return, "safe and stable" without any ups and downs.

Another area in which making change benefits people is their feeling. Doing the same task every day and adhering to tedious routines make ~~the~~ life humdrum and monotonous. According to the new findings of a noted psychologist, conservative people not taking risks are far more susceptible to depression than others. On the contrary, people looking for new experience, have a challenging life, ensuing excitement. They constantly meet new people and face novel situations, through their new experience. Furthermore, when one knows that he or she is changing their life ~~to their excellent fashion for the better, they get~~ become motivated and happy.

All in all, each of those attitudes has its own merits and demerits. However, regarding all of the aforementioned reasons, I am in consummate accord with the notion that changes are crucial ~~toward for~~ the development of both individuals and society. I hope that all the changes in human life result in ~~the~~ a better world.

566 words

Arezoo Besharati: Shahid Beheshti University

156. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The government should support scientific researches even if they are not practical. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \*\*

**Thesis statement:** As far as I am concerned, since the contemporary world is the age of technology, the government should invest in scientific projects in general and small impractical collegiate projects in particular.

Scientific development	Welfare	Convenience, services Happiness, health
	Wealth	Resources National capital Water, electricity, gas, solar
	Enthusiasm	Researchers, scholars

It is indubitably axiomatic that scientific research is of vital importance in the development of any country, and science plays a crucial role in the prosperity of every society. There is an intense controversy as to whether governments should only invest in practical researches, or, in addition to it, they have to consider ~~small~~, impractical collegiate investigations. Governments have many reasons to invest in practical researches and an equal number of reasons to support the impractical ones. As far as I am concerned, since the contemporary world is the age of technology, the government should invest in all scientific projects, in any field and type, for a great number of reasons, three of which—that is—an increase in national wealth, the provision of people's welfare, and, above all, the generation of enthusiasm in young researchers are the most conspicuous ones.

To begin with, without any shadow of doubt, ~~minor~~ these "impractical" researches are the keystone of industrial projects, creating national wealth. It is crystal clear that industrial projects originate from universities in which many practical as well as impractical investigations are in hand. The government not only should support practical researches, but they should consider ~~non-functional~~ other projects such as theoretical investigations and ~~small~~, impractical collegiate projects as well because impractical researches can open a new way/door toward acquiring new practical, straightforward projects, which propel societies into prosperity. To illustrate my point, let me provide a little example. I have experimentally worked on the fabrication of solar cells during my M.Sc. project. Solar cells have opened a new concept for supplying ~~of~~ renewable energy, in particular in my country ~~in~~ which receives quite a few-bit ~~amounts~~ of solar emission. However, since the authorities have ~~been~~ focused on a definite practical project, namely nuclear energy, ~~the~~ solar energy is of no account to them. Therefore, they designate little financial support ~~on~~ to the development of solar panels. If they pay more attention ~~in~~ to this ~~regard~~ issue, we could benefit from ~~the~~ solar energy blessings and become a wealthy nation ~~at the prospect of~~ as far as energy is concerned. As a result, impractical researches are the foundation of industrial, and medical ~~and~~ curial achievements, paving the way toward the apex of success.

Secondly, the conventional wisdom is that the galloping rate at which people's welfare is flourishing depends upon the amount of progression of science and technology, giving rise to an increase in industrial projects. It stands to reason that the more scientific development is ~~achieves~~ achieved, the more welfare is provided for people. Unless the government invests in trivial scientific investigations, such modern conveniences as health services, public transportation, media, and state-of-the-art

facilities, to name but a few, will not advanced, which are the fruit of practical researches, for practical projects originate from researches which seem apparently superficial. As a consequence, non-functional collegiate projects are an invaluable source of prospective practical researches to which require specific attention, providing more welfare for people in the future.

Last but not least, there are quite a lot of young researchers, scholars, and investigators at universities where many minor researches are being done. If the government supports them in their impractical scientific projects, it can improve their motivation to try their best for the sake of discovery a decent approach to unravel emerging challenges in human beings life. Practical researches require highly qualified experts ~~withdrawing-singled out~~ from among the scholars who are working on impractical projects. Accordingly, a far-sighted government does not take impractical researches for granted.

All in all, by taking into account all the above reasons, in spite of the fact that the government should invest in practical scientific researches, it is absolutely essential that the small collegiate projects, which are not practical, require a major consideration. Overall, the government should consider the trivial researches as a blessing in disguise, and it is worthwhile to allot a decent annual budget to them.

631 words

Amir Mahmoud Bakhshayesh: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

**157. People have different ways of escaping the stress and difficulties of modern life. Some read; some exercise; others work in their gardens. What do you think are the best ways of reducing stress? Use specific details and examples in your answer. \*\*\***

Turn to entertainment -> picnic	
Changing our moods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make happier -&gt; release some hormones -&gt; reduce the chemical substance effect</li> <li>• Live in time and forget any other else -&gt; changing their concentration</li> <li>• Especially with friends -&gt; more fun, more laugh, more exciting times -&gt; more energy for encountering problems</li> <li>• Think about those times -&gt; help to avoid the negative thoughts</li> <li>• amusement park or funfair -&gt; full of happy times</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh air, without any kind of pollution</li> <li>• Diet food &lt;- hard to pack and lack of need equipment</li> <li>• Laying down under sun + relaxing</li> <li>• A way for reunion of friends -&gt; satisfaction and enjoyable time -&gt; review great memories -&gt; health of mind</li> <li>• خنده بر هر دردی دواست</li> </ul>

It is indubitably axiomatic that the-plenty of daily routines, jobs, and household ~~works~~-chores, without being in repose, will cause a number of mental, and physical diseases. As In order to avoid them, people turn to seek solace in/resort to entertainment. The fact is that they enjoy a great number of ways for getting rid of the strain of life, three of which are reading, exercising, and gardening, to name but a few. I, however, believe that the significance of none of them is as tangible as that of taking a picnic. The vital aspects of going out as a picnic ~~emerge~~-are demonstrated ~~into~~ a great number of issues, among which changing one's mood and enhancing health are of great consequences, which are discussed hereunder.

To begin with, many psychological studies have proven that people are able to change their moods by concentrating on ~~the~~-positive or negative thoughts. As far as concentration is concerned, going out helps people to direct their thinking to ~~have~~-having fun, enjoying their own times, avoiding ~~the~~-negative thoughts, and eventually, altering their feelings. In addition, for all people, nothing is more gratifying than taking ~~their~~-trips, while keeping their friend's' company. With this in mind, they enjoy more fun, laugh more delighted laughs, have more satisfaction as well as enjoyable moments, and complain less about their life, to name but a handful. As a result, such entertainments as going outside, specifically being in the company of friends, will undoubtedly improve one's mood. Hence, one is capable of properly preparing him- or herself ~~for~~-to-~~encountering~~ life and work problems.

Secondly, it is crystal clear that being under stress triggers ~~for~~-releasing dangerous chemical substances into blood vessels. On the other hand, both smile and laugh created by entertainment in general and going out in particular will not only change one's temper but also increase the level of some useful hormones in the human body, which alleviates the effects of negative chemical



substances. Additionally, the fresh air of the countryside ~~with the~~ and ~~lack of the~~ pollutions of any kinds--noise, visual, and air pollution--is a calming influence for people. Moreover, not only does one usually eat diet foods so much so that it goes hard with people to pack a great deal of foods for taking a picnic, but he or she enjoys laying down under the sun and getting relaxed as well, ~~All~~ all of which, bring about a clean bill of health.

To sum up, by taking into account all the mentioned reasons, in spite of the fact that human beings have to apply some ways of avoiding the stress of life, I believe that the privileges of taking a picnic as entertainment is the best one ~~for to~~ doing so. Eventually, let's be all packed and ready to take a picnic; ~~for to disposing~~ dispose of the hustle and bustle of the modern life.

469 words

Amir Foroughi: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

**158. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The automobile is destroying our quality of life. Use specific reasons and examples to support your opinion. \*\***

This plan is too long for the exam, but it has many things to offer.

Thesis Statement: I strongly agree with this idea because:

**Endangering individuals' health** → health hazards/threats, obesity, lack of physical activity, losing physical fitness, air pollution, respiratory disease, fatal heart disease, chronic trouble with spinal column, tiredness, individuals' temper flares, accident, get one's ticket punched

**Serious social problems** → traffic jam, humankind as distinct bricks of torn down building of society, lack of social interactions, illusion of mastery over society, largely symbolic gesture, widening gap between the rich and the poor, psychological complex, greed, humiliation, individualism, calamity in disguise, greedy and selfish society, the kiss of death for humanity and unity of society

**Uneconomical decision** → Capitalism, wheel and deal, lobby, high opportunity cost, fuel, inefficient allocation of limited resources, (fossil-fuel-dependent industry, education, information technology, public transportation, (subway, bus, Cycling), (US V.S. Northern Europe), environmentally friendly

As Antoine de Saint-Exupery—the eminent French writer, poet, and aviator—once said, “The machine does not isolate man from the great problems of nature, but plunges him more deeply into them.” In today’s world, it is generally agreed upon that the advent of the automobile industry has led to a source of great comfort and performance. On the other hand, parallel to the above-mentioned quote, I subscribe to the belief that the emergence of automobile, as an indispensable part of life, has resulted in catastrophic repercussions. The reasons why I believe so are manifold—three of which, however, are of great consequence: endangering individuals’ health, serious social problems, and self-serving rather than efficient allocation of limited resources.

To begin with, it is both widely and firmly believed that health, as the cornerstone of one’s life, must be meticulously taken into account. To fit some regular exercise into one’s daily routine can be beneficial for individuals and prevent them from being obese and “out-of-fitness”. However, by making a habit of driving, individuals could barely take part in physical activities such as walking, jogging, or cycling. Moreover, as a consequence of traffic jam and air pollution, which are two inevitable major disadvantages of systematic overproduction of automobiles, all people, whether they drive or not, are under the threat of fatal respiratory and heart diseases.

Another demerit of an “automobile-oriented” city has to do with severe social problems. Being inextricably interwoven with the issue of modern culture, the objective of authorities who have mastery over the car industry is not only to provide people with means of transport but also to create and to spread a spanking new attitude, which bears symbolic meanings. In other words, owning a specific car indicates one’s specific social class in today’s world—that is—the more ~~luxury-luxurious~~ is one’s car is, the more ~~one deserves a~~ social respect one deserves. Therefore, this capitalist viewpoint, as a prevailing spirit among automobile corporation’s decision-makers, paves the way for a greedy and selfish society, which suffers from the widening gap between the rich and the poor.

Last but not least, although government is supposed to, wisely rather than improvidently, allocate limited resources ~~among to~~ various investment programs, there are quite a ~~few-bit of~~ few overwhelming evidences, which reveals that self-serving stakeholders in the automobile industry, at a cost to the members of society, accomplish their objectives by wheeling and dealing. To put it differently, in addition to extra cost of fuel consumption, the car industries involve high expense of supplying a great deal of raw materials required in production. As far as the welfare of all individuals is concerned, developing a well-structured public transportation system creates economies of scale and is far more reasonable than providing each individual, or even each family, with a distinct car.

All in all, I do believe that the automobile is a severe hazard to the members of a society who seek a life-style of high quality. As far as I am concerned, grounded on the above paragraphs, the three main disadvantages of the automobile are health threats, severe social problems, and inefficient use of limited resources. If the car industries keep on "encapsulating" each member of societies in an isolated car, sooner or later, it will spell the death of the issue of humanity.

545 words

Vahab Mokhtary: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

**Topic 159: \*\*\***

**Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Face-to-face communication is better than other types of communication, such as letters, email, or telephone calls. Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.**

Face-to-face communication		Passive communication
(+) See in person, acquire firsthand knowledge  (-) Inefficient, counterproductive in terms of time and budget  (-) Limited number of visits	<b>Time/Money</b>	(+) Time management, Cost management  (+) Less expenditure on travel costs  (+) Doing things efficiently  (+) A specific group of people—shy people—benefit most.  (-) No firsthand experience/view  (-) Lack of social skills (exacerbates)
(-) Limited number of fruitful friendships/communication but shoulders to cry on!  (+) Socializing skills, speak intimately, look into the eyes deeply	<b>Variety of choices and opportunities of friendship/communication</b>	(-) No real relationship  (+) Possibly more friends, more choices available  (+) More solutions/advice/consultation at the time of difficulty  (+) Having access to those living at distance, no homesickness, virtually sitting next to you!

From the dawn of humanity, human beings have been endowed with an irreplaceable gift—communication. Since humans are gregarious creatures by nature, the role of communication in our lives cannot be overstated. This gift has served countless multi-faceted functions, from simply establishing relationships with friends and family to the more complex function of exchanging experience and information. From psychological point of view, studies assert that the most effective way of communication is undeniably the face-to-face one. Nevertheless, this system of 'bartering' information is losing its supremacy nowadays. With the advent of computers, this process has been subject to a tremendous change. Communication has been significantly facilitated by virtue of science and technology, finding its way through the virtual world of binary numbers. I have a penchant for the 'passive' type of communication, namely the Internet, email, and telephone, to name but a handful, rather than the face-to-face one for many reasons, three of which—that is—primarily, being both more time and cost effective, being more efficient, and paving the way for diverse ranges of choices of friendships or relationships available to humans to try, are among the most conspicuous ones.

Time is, as we all know, money. Such valuation of time leads people to extreme efforts to maximize their use of time. In particular, the 21st century is indisputably the century of delirious construction and manufacturing. Given the consumerist disposition of human beings, no room is left for squandering the most precious gift of life—time. Take, for instance, the case of a giant corporation in the East coast, which has undertaken a project of major proportions on the West coast. Engineers from this corporation would have to waste countless hours of their otherwise productive time to travel a distance of hundreds of miles to visit the site in person—a task which causes not only the progress of the project to suffer, but also its timeline to be disrupted. It is, therefore, more efficient, both in terms of time and cost management, that all the meetings and visits be held via the Internet. While possibly less time efficient, doing the same task face to face can help share the real feelings of workers working in the site, resulting in a better work place.

Moreover, the problems having to do with traveling and commutation are severely curtailed when choosing “passive” ways of communication. Many have a feeling of lethargy having to go to places in person. More importantly, one may feel shy to meet with others and find it rather difficult to change this unpleasant habit. Life can turn into nirvana for them having the choice to avoid face-to-face communication, providing them with the otherwise impossible opportunity to work and live like ordinary people. This is, beyond doubt, another privilege of passive communication, as opposed to the face-to-face one.

Last but not least, owing to the physical constraints that our bodies have to comply with, by opting for face-to-face communication, chances for successful and fruitful relationships increasingly narrow. By contrast, passive communication proves both useful and integral in this regard, broadening the choice to immensely larger groups of people with whom one can enjoy communicating. Nonetheless, further thought may question whether a passive friendship can be regarded as a real one—in which both sides feel sympathy, commiserate, care, and grieve for each other. It stands to reason that with so many relatives and friends at one's disposal, some of whom may live at distance, one's choices of consultation, for instance, at time of difficulty, extensively expands, not to mention the fact that a great number of such contemporary diseases as homesickness and loneliness are easily treated thanks to the miracle of passive communication. As a consequence, passive communication is probably superior, even when it comes to real friendships.

In conclusion, with all this taken into account, I believe that other types of communication rather than the face-to-face one, have merits which far outweigh their demerits. Although face-to-face communication brings some advantages, namely the ability to share feelings, air one's views, and use body language, passive communication proves more efficient in our hectic life since it enables us to manage our time and budget more effectively, do tasks more efficiently, and have access to broader views in a shorter amount of time, to name but a few. In other words, passive communication diminishes the borders between us and others.

729 words

Siavash Kananian: Sharif University of Technology (SUT)

## 10. Integrated Task

In the integrated task in the Writing section of the iBT TOEFL test, you will be asked to read an academic passage as part of the task. In this part of the integrated task, it is important for you to be able to read an academic passage of 250-300 words and have a good understanding of the issue to be prepared for the listening and taking notes from it. **Do not take any notes from the reading passage if there are items in it that you have not understood yet.** The integrated task is based on both a reading and a lecture. You will be required to summarize the information you have read and to relate information heard in the lecture to information in the passage<sup>1</sup>. **If you would like to get a high score in this task, try to write a range of vocabularies between 250 and 450.**

### 10.1 Study Tips

- Look for magazine or newspaper articles that are about 300 words long. Time yourself as you read the articles. You should aim to read 300 words in less than three minutes. After reading, try to outline the article. Then, without looking back at the article, try to write a summary of the article from your outline.
- Practice listening to short reports given in English. There are many websites where such reports are available online. While you listen to a report, take notes. Try to summarize the report from your notes.
- Look for a variety of exercises in writing books you have studied that practice paraphrasing.
- Study the methods such books suggest for paraphrasing. Focus especially on exercises that practice the usage of synonyms and/or changing the grammar of given sentences in order to paraphrase them.
- Review useful phrases and expressions for citing sources. Pay attention to where these citation phrases can be placed in sentences and how the phrases should be punctuated.
- Practice your typing skills in English. You must type your essay for the TOEFL.

### 10.2 Test Management

- For the integrated writing task, you will read a passage and listen to a lecture afterwards. The reading passage disappears during the lecture and reappears afterward, so do not worry about taking notes on all of the key points in the reading. You will NOT be able to hear the lecture again, so it is important to take good notes while you listen.
- You must type out your answers. You can use icon buttons at the top of the screen for editing. The editing tools include cut, paste, undo, and redo.

<sup>1</sup> *Mastering Skills for the TOEFL iBT (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*

- Make every effort to use effective language and appropriate sentence structure and vocabulary. Try NOT to use vocabulary or constructions that you are not confident with, as this will increase your chances of making errors.
- Use a variety of language. English has a large number of synonyms and analogous constructions, so using the same construction repeatedly is considered poor style.
- Keep the 50-minute time limit for the entire writing section in mind. Remember that graders are expecting to read draft essays, not finely polished final products. If you find yourself stuck on a particular part of your essay, it is best to move on and complete the essay, then go back and fix the difficult area if time allows.
- Try to leave at least five minutes for revision. When revising, be sure to look for spelling or grammatical errors (remember, there is no spell checker on the test), as well as ways to improve the structure and flow of your essay.

### 10.3 How Integrated Writing Will Be Scored

ETS graders will score test takers' essays for integrated writing tasks according to the following scale<sup>1</sup>:

Integrated Writing Task	
Description of Score Levels	
<p><b>A response at this level</b></p> <p>→ Effectively <u>addresses</u> the task by conveying relevant information from the lecture; and</p> <p>→ Accurately relates key information from the lecture to information in the reading; and</p> <p>→ Is well organized and coherent; and</p> <p>→ Contains appropriate grammar and vocabulary with only occasional minor language errors.</p>	5
<p><b>A response at this level</b></p> <p>→ Generally conveys relevant information from the lecture, but may have minor omissions; and</p> <p>→ Is generally good in relating information from the lecture to information in the reading, but may have minor inaccuracies or vagueness of some content or connections among ideas; and</p> <p>→ Is generally well organized;</p>	4

<sup>1</sup>Pamela, J. (2004), *Barron's How to Prepare for the TOEFL (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*. New York: Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

<p>And</p> <p>→ Contains appropriate grammar and vocabulary, but may have noticeable minor language errors or occasional lack of clarity.</p>	
<p><b>A response at this level</b></p> <p>→ Contains some relevant information from the lecture, but may omit one key point;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Conveys some connections between the lecture and the reading, but some content or connections among ideas may be incomplete, inaccurate, or vague;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Contains errors in grammar or usage that result in vagueness of some content or connections among ideas.</p>	3
<p><b>A response at this level</b></p> <p>→ Contains some relevant information from the lecture, but may have significant omissions or inaccuracies of key points;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Omits or largely misrepresents the connections between the lecture and the reading;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Contains language errors that obscure meaning of key ideas or connections among ideas.</p>	2
<p><b>A response at this level</b></p> <p>→ Contains little or no relevant content from the lecture;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Fails to connect points from the lecture and reading;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Contains language errors that greatly obscure meaning;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ Is too brief to allow evaluation of writing proficiency.</p>	1
<p><b>A response at this level</b></p> <p>→ only copies sentences from the reading;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ is not related to the given topic;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ is written in a language <u>other than</u> English;</p> <p>or</p> <p>→ is blank.</p>	0



## 10.4 Sample Outline<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

**Main Topic**

**Main idea of the reading passage**

**Main idea of the lecture**

### Body

**Key point 1**

Supporting information from the reading passage

Supporting information from the lecture

**Key point 2**

Supporting information from the reading passage

Supporting information from the lecture

**Key point 3**

Supporting information from the reading passage

Supporting information from the lecture

### Conclusion: (Optional)

Summary: .....

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<sup>1</sup> *Mastering Skills for the TOEFL iBT (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*

#### 10.4.1 A Sample Task

The following is a sample Integrated Writing task similar to the one you will see when you take the test. You will first be asked to read a passage. On the real test, the reading passage will remain on your screen throughout the task<sup>1</sup>.

**In light of** our growing energy crisis, ethanol has been proposed as a replacement for gasoline. Ethanol is a type of alcohol that is commonly made from corn. Although it has gained widespread popularity as an alternative fuel, ethanol has some serious disadvantages which make it an impracticable replacement for gasoline.

Perhaps the greatest disadvantage of ethanol is that its production means less food to feed the world's hungry. Ethanol requires a lot of corn to produce. This is corn that could be used to feed people in starving countries. Some critics have said that the amount of corn it would take to create one tank of ethanol would be enough to feed a person for an entire year. As a result, the large-scale production of ethanol would seriously reduce the food available and create worldwide starvation.

Ethanol is also highly damaging to the environment. This may seem ironic because one of the praises of ethanol is that it creates less pollution than gasoline does. Yet, as one scholar recently pointed out, ethanol creates major erosion of the Earth's soil. Corn is one of the most damaging crops in regard to soil erosion. Therefore, the mass farming of corn to produce ethanol would create a severe amount of soil erosion.

Finally, the large-scale production of ethanol requires lots of energy. More gasoline would be needed in order to produce this energy, not less. Countries will have to ship in more oil to run the ethanol factories, which will make our energy crisis even worse. Considering all of these disadvantages, it would be better if ethanol was not used to replace gasoline.

Now read the professor's lecture below. On the real test, you will listen to this lecture with your headphones. The audio script of the lecture will NOT appear on your screen.

All right, folks. Today we're going to talk about some alternative fuels we could use to replace the use of gasoline in vehicles. I'm sure most of you know that ethanol has become well-known as a possible replacement for gasoline. Now recently, reports have come out from scientists that criticize the use of ethanol in automobiles. However, when all these criticisms are researched properly, you'll

<sup>1</sup> *Mastering Skills for the TOEFL iBT (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*

find that they're pretty much false.

Now first off, there really isn't any way that ethanol can cause starvation. It's absolutely true that ethanol requires a lot of corn, so yes, we will have to dedicate more cornfields for ethanol production. One would think that since we already have so many starving people out there in the world, this would be wasting a dwindling food supply. Well, let me let you in on a little secret. . . there is currently enough food to feed everyone in this world. How can this be possible with so many starving people? It's because the available food never gets to these people. Starvation is caused by unstable governments, war, lack of transport - not because we don't have enough food to feed everyone. Therefore, we really don't have to worry about ethanol production causing food shortages.

We also don't have to worry about ethanol harming the environment. A couple of years ago, this one scientist - I forget his name - brought up the fact that corn isn't an environmentally-friendly crop. He said that the large-scale corn production needed to produce ethanol would be highly damaging to the Earth's soil. He was correct on the first point, but wrong on the second. Corn does cause a lot more soil erosion than other crops do. Now fifty years ago, this may have been a problem. But today, conservation efforts have become so advanced that we've found new ways to reduce the soil erosion caused by crops like corn. This soil erosion will be a lot less than what the scientist predicted.

Then there's this faulty assumption that the energy needed to produce ethanol will require more gasoline. This is one hundred percent incorrect. Yes, ethanol does require a lot of energy to produce it, but most of this energy will be provided by coal and other natural gases. And unlike gasoline, we have plenty of coal available to use as energy! We won't have to worry about shipping in more gasoline and reducing our already declining oil reserves.

So, to sum it all up, ethanol is a pretty good alternative for gasoline. Most of the claims against it are faulty and the benefits are many. I think we'll soon see ethanol taking the place of gasoline to power our cars.

When the lecture concludes, you will be given a prompt that will ask you to give your response for this task. A prompt for this task might be as follows:

**Summarize the points made in the lecture you just heard, explaining how they cast doubt on the points made in the reading.**

The reading passage will appear once again on your screen. You will have 20 minutes to plan and write your response for this task. A sample outline of a response and a sample response can be found on the next page.

### **A Sample Response:**

The reading and the lecture both **discuss** whether ethanol, a form of alcohol produced from corn, can replace fossil fuels. The reading suggests that there are a number of problems with ethanol that make it a bad replacement for gasoline. However, the lecture disagrees, saying that these problems commonly associated with ethanol are untrue.

The reading and the lecture first discuss the issue of starvation. The reading suggests that using corn for ethanol means less corn can be used for food, resulting in mass starvation. The professor, on the other hand, points out that the world currently has enough food to feed all of the people. He says that starvation is caused by unstable governments and many other factors, not by lack of food.

Secondly, the reading and the lecture discuss ethanol's harm to the environment. The reading states that the corn that produces ethanol creates a lot of soil erosion. In contrast, the professor says that recent conservation efforts have greatly reduced soil erosion caused by corn production, so large-scale corn farming will not be a problem.

Finally, the reading and the lecture discuss the amount of energy needed to produce ethanol. The reading points out that lots of energy is needed to produce ethanol, which will require more gasoline and not less. However, the professor says that this energy is usually provided by coal and other forms of natural gases, not by gasoline.

All in all, the speaker says the claims that ethanol is worse than fossil fuels are not valid. He says that ethanol is a good replacement for fossil fuels.

259 words

## 10.5 Organizing Information<sup>1</sup>

### 10.5.1 Necessary Skills

- Understanding information from both the reading and the listening passages
- Taking notes on the reading and listening passages
- Using information from your notes in your writing
- Synthesizing the information taken from both the reading and listening passages

### 10.5.2 Strategies

- Although preparation time is limited in the writing portion of the test, it is important to use this time to plan the organization of your response. This way, your response will be more relevant and coherent. An organizational process for preparing your response is detailed below. In each step, there are certain things to keep in mind.

Process	Strategy
<b>Read, listen, and take notes.</b>	You will not see the prompt until after you finish reading and listening, so taking notes is essential. Take notes on major and minor points only from the lecture.
<b>Read the question, and understand the task.</b>	Identify what kind of relationship between the reading and the lecture the prompt asks you to discuss.
<b>Select ideas from your notes.</b>	Choose the points you need to discuss. Think about how points in the lecture relate to points in the reading. The lecture will present details that either challenge information presented in the reading, present a counter example, or describe the consequences of an attempt to solve a problem presented in the reading.
<b>Organize the ideas.</b>	Include information from both the reading and the lecture. Clearly, show the relationship between information presented in the lecture and that presented in the reading. Limit the time for organizing to less than two minutes in order to give yourself more time for writing and editing.

<sup>1</sup> *Mastering Skills for the TOEFL iBT (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*

## 10.6 Exercises

### Practice 1: Medical Science

#### Step 1

Read the following passage. Then look at the note diagram and fill in the missing information.

In the past several years, a number of technological advances have made laser eye surgery more widely available. The procedure uses tiny lasers to alter the surface of the eyeball, significantly improving a patient's vision. In spite of its growing popularity, however, laser eye surgery is a costly procedure. Given the number of problems that may accompany the laser vision correction procedure, it is unlikely that many will choose to undergo the surgery.

The first problem with laser eye surgery is the cost. The process requires sophisticated laser systems, which can cost several million dollars. In order to remain in business, the doctors administering laser eye surgery have to charge patients approximately \$1,000 to \$2,000 per eye. For many people, this is far too costly.

In addition, there are concerns about post-operative problems, which are issues that may arise after the surgery. There have been reports of the cornea (the lenses at the front of the eye) detaching themselves from the eyes after laser vision correction. Moreover, laser vision correction advertises a quick recovery time, but many patients report taking weeks and sometimes months to heal fully from the surgery.

It also remains unclear how long laser vision correction will last. A number of people have to go back to a doctor just four or five years after their surgery for another procedure. Even worse, others have to receive a second round of surgery just a few months after the initial procedure in order to perfect their vision. For most consumers, the benefit is not worth the risks and costs involved with the procedure.

**Main idea:** .....with laser vision correction surgery.

**Key point 1:** Laser vision correction surgery.....because of.....

**Key point 2:** Serious problems like.....problems and lengthy.....occur after laser vision correction surgery.

**Key point 3:** Laser vision correction surgery.....

#### Step 2

Now listen to a lecture related to the topic in step 1. Fill in the blanks of the note diagram below with keywords or key phrases used in the lecture.