

## Writing Essays

### 1. Sample essay:

Every week millions of people buy lottery tickets, hoping their small investment will make them rich. They often believe that if they won a million dollars, their troubles would be over. If they actually got the money, would their dreams come true?

Whether people live "happily ever after" when they win the lottery probably depends on what their dreams are. Money can buy some things but not others.

Cash buys houses, cars, and college educations; it pays for medical treatment and clears up overdue bills. Money also purchases travel and new experiences. A million dollars could allow someone to quit a tough, boring job and try for something better. It could provide a feeling of security.

On the other hand, winning so much money could actually cause some problems. A person who quit working might eventually become bored or lose some self-respect. Family members might squabble over what should be purchased. Long-lost friends, relatives, and even complete strangers are likely to want a handout. The winner must then decide whom to help and whom to offend.

Despite all these drawbacks, I would rather win the money than not. The difficulties of having to manage a million dollars are troubles I would like to have.

### 2. Sample essay:

"After the baby is born, things will never be the same." People say that to expectant parents-and they are right!

It will be a long time before those parents can again sleep late in the morning. A baby wakes early, screaming for food. The toddler thinks 6 a.m. is the right time to start the day. After that come early school mornings.

It will be years before the parents can go anywhere together on the spur of the moment. Every outing must be planned ahead so that a baby-sitter can be found. The budget will be stretched, the work load will get heavier, and by the time parents can be alone, they may be too tired to talk. Still, people want children. Why?

One reason is that children are a link to the future. They will probably be here after the parents are gone. In addition, their children will live after them.

A deeper reason for wanting children, perhaps, is that the more people we have to love, the more fulfilled our lives can be. By giving to a child, people enrich their own lives. In the end, we live not only for ourselves, but for others.

### 3. Sample essay:

It hurts to look at a paycheck and see how much of it was taken out for income tax. That money could have paid some important bills. It is easy to dream of doing away with the income tax and keeping all that money for ourselves.

If there were no income tax, however, the government would have a lot less to spend. The money we send to Washington seems to fall into a black hole and disappear. Actually, though, many people depend on it. The money pays the salaries of government employees, who provide services from drug control to highway building. It supports our military defense. Also, much of the money is returned to people in the form of student loans, veterans' benefits, and payments to farmers, for example. The government has been working to cut its budget lately. With every cut, someone complains loudly.

So if the income tax were eliminated, other taxes would have to make up for it. Paying those other taxes would also hurt. Sales taxes fall most heavily on poor people. Taxes on manufacturers only result in higher prices to consumers.

Income taxes are not fun to pay. But doing without them would be worse. In my opinion, income taxes should be made as fair as possible. Then we each must "bite the bullet" and do our share.

### 4. Sample essay:

Television has changed both the way we spend our time and what we know about the world. Some of the changes brought by television have improved our way of life, but others have made it worse.

People today on the average spend several hours a day watching television. In times past, they would sit on their front steps and visit on nice evenings. This neighborly visiting built close friendships, but it seldom takes place any longer. Even though families may all watch TV together, they may not communicate much. Some women have called themselves "sports widows" because their husbands spend every spare minute watching televised football, baseball, and other sports.

On the other hand, people have learned more about the world because of television. People in small towns know more about the city, and people in cities have learned about the country. Politicians, celebrities, wars, and disasters appear in the living room. Programs take viewers to the bottom of the sea, the tops of mountains, and even outer space.

Some people think television leads to violence, immorality, and greed for possessions. I am not sure whether this is true. However, good or bad, TV is here to stay. It is up to each of us to make the most of its opportunities and avoid its problems.

#### 5. Sample essay:

When lack of money prevents us from having something we want very much, it is tempting to dream of being rich. It is hard to keep in mind that Americans are already wealthy compared with people in many other parts of the world. Our modern conveniences would have been the envy of kings in times past. Just the same, most people would like a larger. Whether most people are capable of making a lot of money is another question.

People in average circumstances can often get ahead through education, hard work, and careful money management. But getting ahead is not the same as actually becoming rich.

Only a small percentage of Americans could be called truly wealthy. Some people joined this group from ordinary beginnings. Usually they have done it by carefully riding some major development in the economy on its way up. In the past, great fortunes have been made in oil, steel, and railroads. Recently, some people have made millions in computers and real estate. Usually, though, it takes money to make money. Big investors often start rich and then get richer. Most of us cannot strike oil or start the next new technical breakthrough. Most people are not born into wealthy families, either. In America it certainly is possible to become more prosperous. But unless someone wins the lottery, real wealth is not very likely to come along.

#### 6. Sample essay:

You come home alone after a long day at work. You open the door to your home. No one is there. Is it blessed silence you hear - or echoing emptiness?

The millions of people who live alone today may have either experience. Some love living alone, yet others wish they didn't have to.

When they open that door at night, people who live alone do not have to put up with demands or listen to someone's noise or meet anyone's dinner deadlines. They do not have to debate about which TV program to watch or stay off the phone because someone else is expecting an important call. No one else messes up their kitchen.

But when they are sick, no one else will bring them an aspirin or call the doctor. Preparing dinner for one can be difficult, and eating dinner for one night after night can be very lonely. Perhaps no one really cares what they did all day. If they are feeling sad, there may be no one to cheer them up. Some people who live alone say the worst times come when something very good happens because there is no one to share the joy.

During the course of a lifetime, one may sometimes live with others and sometimes live alone. Each way of life has its advantages. Learning to take advantage of them is one key to contentment.

#### 7. Sample essay:

Sports includes both national teams and the teams for the rest of us. The national teams are mainly concerned with winning and with money. The other teams are mainly concerned with winning and with money. The other teams provide different satisfactions.

Being on a team helps people learn teamwork - to rely on others and to do their own part as well. Players learn both to win and to lose. When the team loses, the members learn that they can come back from a loss. They look for the reasons they were beaten, work on their weaknesses, and try again. When the team wins, the members can learn to be gracious winners and good sports.

Sports are also for play. Most of us have work to do most of the time. Now and then we need to have fun. Sports can provide the time to relax.

If a team helps people learn to work together, lose win, and have fun, it's a winner regardless of the score. But if players on a winning team have not worked together, if they feel that winning makes them better than others, if there was no joy in the sport, those winners are losers.

Having the winning score is important. Being a winner as a person is worth even more.

#### 8. Sample essay:

Advertisers who directly attack their competitors may amuse me if they do it cleverly. However, they have probably lost me as a customer.

Companies who attack their rivals remind me of people who boost their egos by criticizing others. When people do this, I often suspect they have little to offer and may even have something to hide. I would rather find out what is good about a person, not what is bad about someone else. Similarly, I like advertising that lets me know about products that might meet my needs. I don't place much faith in ads telling me what may be wrong with a rival product. I tend to suspect that the information could be biased.

I also believe advertisers are foolish to name their rivals because by doing so they give the competing product free publicity. If the competition is worth attacking, I tend to think it may actually have something to offer.

In advertising, as in life, I believe we should try to be the best we can be, without belittling the next person - or the rival product.

#### 9. Sample essay:

Three generations living together can have both financial and personal advantages. On the other hand, it can also have personal disadvantages.

In years past and today, three generations have probably lived together mostly out of economic necessity or advantage. Sometimes a young family moves in with the older generation because the husband and wife can't afford a place of their own. Sometimes grandparents move in because they aren't well enough or can't afford to live alone anymore. Occasionally, grandparents come to take care of the children so both parents can work. In times past, and sometimes today, three generations have lived together because they all depended on the same farm or business.

Usually these arrangements do help solve financial and practical problems. Everyone has a roof over his or her head. Children and old people in need of care are likely to get it. Often a family can get ahead financially by sharing the work and the bills. In addition, a strong sense of family and of belonging can develop in everyone.

What may be harder to work out are questions of who's in charge. If grandparents don't let go of some authority, the middle generation is likely to resent it. On the other hand, ailing grandparents may force their children to be parents to them and to their own children as well. If parents and grandparents disagree on discipline, children may be confused or angry.

The personal disadvantages can be overcome. For three generations to live together successfully, everyone's needs must be respected.

#### 10. Sample essay:

Television news shows are dramatic and interesting. Watching them is pleasant and does not require the effort of reading. If television did not cover the news, some people would know nothing about what is going on in the world.

However, television newscasters cover only the events that they have time for, and they prefer stories that include some dramatic pictures. Viewers are quickly bored with reporters who sit and talk into the camera. As a result, a complicated story is often cut short.

Newspapers and magazines do a better job of explaining complex events. They can include details, and a person with a special interest can take the time to read them. Others can stick to the headlines.

Reading allows more freedom of choice than television. The TV audience cannot decide which stories to watch. In broadcasting, "one size fits all". However, a person who reads newspapers and magazines can choose to spend time on business, sports, health, or the school board election, depending on special interests.

Television provides a useful glance at what's happening. However, a person who has individual interests and who wants the whole story needs newspapers and magazines as well.

#### 11. Sample essay:

Some people live in one community all their lives, while others move around almost as much as nomads. Both experiences have their advantages and disadvantages.

People who stay in one spot can develop lifelong friendships, and such friends may lend a hand if trouble comes. They know each other's life history, and they judge each other for the kind of person each is, not for the image each projects.

Yet spending a lifetime in one location can also lock a person into a limited way of life. Personal change may become very difficult. People with few experiences may develop a narrow outlook and find it hard to understand those who have different ethnic, racial, or religious backgrounds. On the other hand, moving to different parts of the country is usually stressful. A person may feel lost and uprooted in a place where streets, stores, schools, and churches all are different. At first there are no friends to help.

However, those who do move learn that people in other places have a variety of outlooks. There is a chance to appreciate different ways of life and even to choose the way one likes best.

For a person who moves to a different place year after year, the disadvantages of moving probably outweigh the advantages. But a few moves are probably worth the effort. By staying in each place for a length of time, people can broaden their outlook but have enough time to make adjustment and form friendships.

#### 12. Sample essay:

The automobile has probably changed people's way of life more than any other invention of the last century. More than electric lights, television, air travel, or even computers, automobiles have changed where people live and work, how they make a living, and even how they find a mate. Before there were cars, people generally traveled on foot or by horse and buggy over unpaved roads. Whether they lived in the city or the country, they rarely went farther than a few miles from home. They saw the same people and places year after year.

The car opened up whole new worlds. Roads were paved, and motorists went to see different parts of the country. Some decided to stay. People with cars could live farther from their jobs, and so the age of commuting began. New suburbs sprang up around the cities. The auto industry boomed, and millions of Americans made a living manufacturing, selling, servicing, or insuring cars.

As more people got cars, your people began driving them. No longer was courtship confined to the girl's front porch, under the watchful eye of her parents. The automobile began the sexual revolution.

Some people believe that commuting, suburban life, and courting in cars are mixed blessings. Whether the changes are good or bad, they seem to be here to stay.

#### 13. Sample essay:

Many people complain that modern society is too materialistic. Other people, they say, place too great an importance on material property. Rather than value values, these critics insist, people today value things.

There is no doubt that we live in a material, consumer-oriented society. In economic terms, consumers use products; in everyday language, they acquire things: TVs, cars, clothes, furniture. This kind of materialism can actually be good for a society since it helps create jobs. When people have jobs, they acquire self-respect along with the money they need to provide the material things they and their families require.

It is true, on the other hand, that many people have taken healthy consumerism too far.

Materialism is evident when an otherwise intelligent person goes into debt charging things that he or she cannot pay for. Materialism is evident when people insist on buying a particular designer label even though the same quality can be found in a cheaper product. Materialism is evident when people are judged and admired for what they own rather than what they are or can do.

Even if society has gone too far in the direction of materialism, as some say, the individual person doesn't need to surrender. He or she can still value honesty, integrity, freedom, talent, quality, and all the other values there are to value and leave the materialism to others.

#### 14. Sample essay:

People spend a great deal of time, money, and energy to see or read about movie stars, TV actors, singers, and athletes. Such celebrities often become idols. Posters, T-shirts, fan clubs, and attendance at live performances prove that. What do celebrities do to merit this attention?

Celebrities create excitement. They create excitement because they have done something or can do something that supposedly not everyone else can do. Raising a child, waking early to go to work each morning, building a home and a place in the community-these achievements actually deserve more admiration than rolling through Beverly Hills in a limousine or jetting across the Atlantic to star in a new movie. Yet because these achievements are part of many people's everyday lives, they are not considered special. Celebrities help us dream by lifting us out of our everyday lives and imagining ourselves doing other than everyday activities.

Celebrities also set styles. They become models for behavior, clothing, and hairdos. Just consider Elvis Presley or the Beatles, for example. Celebrities also influence politics, as Bob Hope and Robert Redford have done.

Celebrities' roles as "special people" and trendsetters, then, are the reason for the attention many of us lavish on them. In many ways, the celebrities of today have merely replaced the kings and queens of old.

15. Sample essay:

Most people want to be successful in life, but success can come about in four ways: fame, money, knowledge, and pleasure. Success is also usually characterized by the word more; to be successful, people feel they have to be more famous, have more money, absorb more information, or enjoy life more.

Success does not need to be characterized by quantity, however. Instead, you can measure the success of your life by its quality. It is not important, for example, how many people know you but who knows you and for what. Working in your community or on good relationships with family and friends can bring quality fame. Earning less money but spending it wisely and learning the joy saving is another way to succeed. Learning more so that you can turn around and teach someone else produces quality knowledge. And finally, all the above will most likely bring you quality success in enjoying the pleasures of living.

Success, in conclusion, can be seen in different ways by different people. Only one thing is sure. No matter what other people see, the only one who knows whether you're succeeded is you.

16. Sample essay:

Every year billions of dollars are spent on advertising. Many approaches are used to persuade consumers to buy a product. Some seem to work better than others.

One approach, for example, is to try to make the reader or viewer identify with the people shown using the product. These people seem to be glamorous, loved, successful, elite, clever, or sexy. Supposedly, anyone who uses the product can expect the same reward. Another approach is to let the product speak for itself; people are attracted to scrumptious food, beautiful clothing, and sleek new cars. Sometimes good prices and special deals are the focus. Ads for complicated products, such as computers, may provide a lot of information. Endorsements by celebrities are especially common.

In general, many of the ads succeed. People do tend to buy what they see advertised. However, some advertising can backfire. People may be offended, for example, by ads that are overly sexy or ones that viciously or sarcastically attack competitors' products.

Advertising can be a useful aid for the consumer. It helps a person learn what is new or in style or handy to have around, what things cost, and where to buy them. To use this information effectively, however, a person must learn to look past the emotional appeals and find the facts.

17. Sample essay:

Some animals are pets, some are wild, and many of them provide us with food. All have a different - and important - role in our lives.

It is easy to forget that the steak at the supermarket once formed part of a steer. But without domestic animals such as chickens and cattle, we would all be vegetarians, or a great deal of our time would need to be spent hunting.

Wild animals attract sport hunters. For some people they are even an important source of food. When urban people visit the wild, deer, bears, and other wild animals remind them of an older way of life.

Pets, however, are the animals that are especially significant for most of us. They are undemanding companions; they love us when we are not at our best. A pet can be a great comfort when life seems hard.

For children, pets can be both fun and instructive. If a child cares for a pet, he or she learns to take responsibility for another being. Watching kittens or puppies being born can be a natural form of sex education. For children, as for adults, pets are loving companions and a help in tough time.

As I recall, an Indian chief once said, "Without our brothers, the animals, we would all be very lonely." I believe he was right.