



## ESSAY 1

*Happiness is considered very important in life. Why is it difficult to define?  
What factors are important in achieving happiness?*

It is true that happiness is very important in people's life, but some people have different views about how to be happy. This essay will discuss the reasons that makes happiness difficult to understand and the things how to **attain** it. There are things that can make a person happy, while others do not such as a stable job, a beautiful house, or winning a lottery. A person will be happy with his life if he is able to feed his family by having a permanent job. Also, if the house is decent, he will be happy to see how comfortable life is to live in a place with wonderful furniture and appliances. Finally, winning a huge sum of money is a dream coming true for most people. However, others do not like to buy lottery tickets because some people believe that once they have won the lottery, they might put their family's life at risk, perhaps, they think somebody will try to kidnap their kids and ask for a ransom.

On the other hand, there are simple factors in attaining happiness. For example, when a family of five could **meet the basic needs** such as food, clothing and a house, these could make a family **satisfied with** what they already have in life as long as they are together. Another example is being able to pass an English proficiency test to be qualified to become a registered nurse in Canada. Most foreign workers would be very glad if they could **pursue their career** after passing such a test.

In conclusion, people have their own meaning of happiness and there are reasons why certain things make them happy such as basic needs or passing an examination test.



## ESSAY 2

*Some people think that museums should be enjoyable places to entertain people, while others believe that the purpose of museums is to educate. Discuss both views and give you own opinion.*

People have different views about the role and function of museums. In my opinion, museums can and should be both entertaining and educational. On the one hand, it can be argued that the main role of a museum is to entertain. Museums are tourist attractions, and their aim is to **exhibit a collection** of interesting objects that many people want to see. The average visitor may become bored if he or she has to read or listen to too much educational content, so museums often **put more of an emphasis** on enjoyment rather than learning. This type of museums is designed to be visually spectacular, and it may have **interactive** activities or even games as part of its exhibitions.

On the other hand, some people argue that museums should focus on education. The aim of any exhibition should be to teach visitors something that they did not previously know. Usually this means that the history behind the museum's exhibits needs to be explained, and this can be done in various ways. Some museums employ professional guides to talk to their visitors, while other museums offer headsets so that visitors can listen to detailed **commentary** about the exhibition. This way, museums can play an important role in teaching people about history, culture, science and many other aspects of life.

In conclusion, it seems to me that a good museum should be able to offer an interesting, enjoyable and educational experience so that people can both have fun and learn something at the same time.



### ESSAY 3

*Popular hobbies and interests change over time and are more a reflection of trends and fashions than an indication of what individuals really want to do in their spare time.*

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.*

**In comparison with** even the recent past, the choice of leisure activities on offer today is vast, so it is reasonable to find that some of these activities **reflect** the trends and fads of the day.

People have far more money and time than before to pursue their interests but the ever-increasing number of activities does not automatically guarantee **continuity**. In fact, new hobbies come and go. For example, sports such as roller blading lose their fascination after a few months. Similarly, although snowboarding has taken over from traditional skiing, it is doubtful whether its popularity will last. Other things like electronic games go out of date almost as soon as you have bought them because the manufacturers promote the fact that only the latest version is worth having. And so ensure continued sales.

On the other hand, not everyone is **a victim of fashion** in this way and people of all ages and backgrounds may take up hobbies for social reasons. Traditional hobbies range from participation in active sports like tennis to old favorites such as chess and stamp collecting, and these continue to be popular. By joining a club, people can make friends and feel part of a group with whom they can **share a common interest** and leisure time. Where sport is concerned, most people know what they like and participate **out of love** of the game, rather than because it is currently fashionable.

I believe, therefore, that while fashion may have an influence, particularly among the young, the majority of people enjoy their hobbies for their own sake. **(261 Words) Band**



### Các cụm từ cần nhớ

- In comparison with: So với
- reflect(v): phản ánh
- continuity(n): sự tiếp tục
- a victim of fashion: người đam mê thời trang
- share a common interest: có chung một niềm yêu thích
- out of love: vì tình yêu (cho điều gì)



## ESSAY 4

*As most foreign aid often benefits the donor more than the receiver, developing countries should refuse to repay their debts.*

*To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

Over the past 30 years, many countries have sent most of their income **repaying the interest on foreign debts**. Many people consider the initial loans responsible for these debts to be more beneficial to the lender than to the borrower. I agree with this view.

In the past, most developing countries were short of ready funds to build the infrastructure necessary for development. Therefore, foreign countries were asked to provide loans for projects to help the countries become **self-reliant**. However, this money was often used to make quick profits for developers or to **line the pockets** of corrupt officials. Once the money is used, the problem of repayment begins.

Since the 1970s many developing countries have found that they cannot pay back the loans or even the interest is **accumulated** on the loans. Consequently, the countries have borrowed more money to pay back the interest. This gave Western countries the power to **dictate** government policy through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These financial institutions are only interested in **balance sheets**. Therefore, nations have been forced to adopt policies which do nothing to develop their resources or improve the lives of the local people. Countries that **get caught in** this **debt spiral** have no chance of paying back the initial money borrowed, while the banks making the loans make two or three times the money lent after the interest payments are taken into account. As most donor countries have already been repaid, both in terms of money and in term of economic interest, it is **morally** right for developing countries to refuse to pay back foreign loans.



In conclusion, as foreign aid does not always guarantee the well-being and the economic development of the borrowers, it is reasonable for these countries to refuse to repay their debts.

## **(264 Words) Band 9**

### **Các cụm từ cần nhớ**

- repay the interest on foreign debts: trả lại lãi của các món nợ nước ngoài
- self-reliant(adj): độc lập, tự phụ thuộc vào bản thân
- line the pockets: kiếm tiền một cách bất chính
- accumulate(v): tích lũy
- dictate(v): qui định
- balance sheet: bảng cân đối kế toán (trong bài trên có thể hiểu là tiền)
- get caught in: bị vướng mắc vào
- debt spiral: việc nợ chồng chất
- morally(adv): về mặt đạo đức



## ESSAY 5

*In recent years some countries have experienced very rapid economic development. This has resulted in much higher standards of living in urban areas but not in the country side. This situation may bring some problems for the country as a whole. What are these problems? How might they be reduced?*

From the evidence of developing countries all over the world, it seems **inevitable** that economic growth is generated in the business and industrial centers of the major cities. As a result, urban citizens have access to jobs and facilities that improve their living standards considerably. However, it is usually the case that these are not equally enjoyed by people in the countryside and this **generates** several problems for the countries concerned.

First of all, people from the countryside will try to move to the cities to get more employment opportunities and better access to facilities available there. However, this increase in the urban population **puts great pressure on** housing and services, and leads to **the creation of massive slum areas** where conditions may be lower than standards in the rural villages which are often left **under-populated**. This can impact food production and can have severe affects for people in both urban and rural areas.

Finally, as a country's economy develops, there may be an increasing **sense of inequality** as the towns get richer and the villages get poorer, and this may lead to more crime and even **civil unrest**. The key to reducing these problems seems to lie in improving the standard of living and the facilities available in the countryside. Perhaps incentives can be offered to factories and companies to relocate; road and rail networks can be built to make such **relocation** possible; doctors and teachers could be required to spend part of their professional lives in rural areas.



In conclusion, discrepancies in economic growth can cause pressures on the overall living standards and many production activities. The essential way to deal with this is to try to **rebalance the equality scale** between urban and rural areas, by improving facilities and relocating businesses to the less advantaged regions.

### **(272 Words) Band 9**

#### **Các cụm từ cần nhớ**

- inevitable(adj): không thể tránh khỏi
- generate(v): tạo ra, sản sinh ra
- put great pressure on: tạo áp lực lên
- the creation of massive slum areas: sự hình thành các khu nhà ổ chuột
- under-populated(adj): ít người sinh sống, dân số ít
- sense of inequality: cảm giác về cuộc sống bất công
- civil unrest: bất ổn xã hội
- relocation(n): sự di dời
- rebalance the equality scale: san bằng lại cán cân bình đẳng





## ESSAY 6

*Young people in the modern world seem to have more power and influence than any previous young generation.*

*Why is this the case? What impact does this have on the relationship between old and young people?*

I would agree that young people today play a bigger role in society than their parents' or grandparents' generation did. This is mainly due to the larger social and technological changes that have **increased the gap between the generations**. Young people today are generally better educated, and because they have been trained from a young age to use computer technology, they have Internet access to information in a way that was **unimaginable** for earlier generations. This means that they are probably better informed than their parents' grandparents were at their age, and their **hi-tech skills** give them confidence in dealing with the very rapid changes in technology that are so uncomfortable for older people.

In addition, younger people are often the most affected by globalization. They follow fashions in clothes, music and social habits that are common among young people throughout the world. So they have become powerful consumers who influence big global markets today. As a result of these developments, relationships with older people are often difficult. Teachers and parents are treated with less respect, and experience is **undervalued** because young people think they know everything, or at least can learn about everything from the Internet. In many cultures, this has led to **a decline in school discipline**, an increase in **family breakdowns** and even serious social problems.

However, the current generation gap is the responsibility of both younger and older generations. Both have to make efforts to understand each other and **a good starting point** would be for families to spend more time together than they normally do today.



## (264 Words) Band 9

### Cụm từ quan trọng:

- increase the gap between the generations: gia tăng khoảng cách giữa các thế hệ  
unimaginable(adj): không thể tưởng tượng được
- hi-tech skills: các kỹ năng máy tính
- undervalue(v): đánh giá thấp
- a decline in school discipline: sự xuống thấp trong kỷ luật nhà trường  
family breakdowns: việc các gia đình tan vỡ
- a good starting point: một điểm khởi đầu tốt



## ESSAY 7

*The only way to reduce the amount of traffic in cities today is by reducing the need for people to travel from home for work, education or shopping. To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

It is certainly true that today traffic in cities throughout the world has become a major problem. This is obvious from the number of vehicles on our roads and the amount of pollution they cause. Probably the traffic problem is due to people **commuting** for work, study and other purposes and this is evident in the rush hours.

It is also true that today such daily commuting is not always necessary because people can do these things from home, we can see this in the options **Information Technology** gives us today. For instance, on-line work, distance learning and shopping facilities are all available via the internet.

However, even if everyone had access to the technology and the opportunity to work from home, it is **unrealistic** to think that everyone would want to. Even though the technology for working, studying or shopping on-line makes this option a possibility, it would mean people had less freedom of choice and less social contact in their lives. This would have a large impact on society as a whole.

So, in conclusion, I think that while this practice could reduce the traffic problems in our cities, it is most unlikely to be an acceptable solution. In terms of other solutions, perhaps we need to think more carefully about **facilitating public transport** and **limiting private cars** in our city centers. The development of public transport that is not **road-based**, such as sky trains or subways would probably be a more workable alternative measure to reduce congestion on our roads.

**(260 Words)**

**Các cụm từ cần nhớ**



- commute(v): đi lại
- unrealistic(adj): không thực tiễn, viễn vông
- facilitate public transport: tạo điều kiện thuận lợi cho phương tiện công cộng  
limit private cars: giới hạn số lượng xe cá nhân
- road-based(adj): (về xe cộ) hoạt động trên đường

## ESSAY 8

*Some people believe that hobbies need to be difficult to be enjoyable. To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

Some hobbies are relatively easy, while others **present more of a challenge**. Personally, I believe that both types of hobby can be fun, and I therefore disagree with the statement that hobbies need to be difficult in order to be **enjoyable**. On the one hand, many people enjoy easy hobbies. One example of an activity that is easy for most people is swimming. This hobby requires very little equipment, it is simple to learn, and it is **inexpensive**. I remember learning to swim at my local swimming pool when I was a child, and it never felt like a demanding or challenging experience. Another hobby that I find easy and fun is photography. In my opinion, anyone can take interesting pictures without knowing too much about the **technicalities** of operating a camera. Despite being straightforward, taking photos is a satisfying activity.

On the other hand, difficult hobbies can sometimes be more exciting. If an activity is more challenging, we might feel **a greater sense of satisfaction** when we manage to do it successfully. For example, film editing is a hobby that requires a high level of knowledge and expertise. In my case, it took me around two years before I became **competent** at this activity, but now I enjoy it much more than I did when I started. I believe that many hobbies give us more pleasure when we **reach a higher level of performance** because the results are better and the feeling of achievement is greater.



In conclusion, simple hobbies can be fun and relaxing, but difficult hobbies can be equally pleasurable for different reasons.

(266 words)

### Các cụm từ cần nhớ

- present more of a challenge: mang dáng vẻ của một thử thách
- enjoyable(adj): thích thú, hấp dẫn
- inexpensive(adj): không đắt đỏ
- technicalities: khía cạnh chuyên môn
- a greater sense of satisfaction: cảm giác hài lòng lớn hơn
- competent(adj): thành thạo, thông thạo
- reach a higher level of performance: đạt đến trình độ cao hơn

### ESSAY 9

*Some people think that all teenagers should be required to do unpaid work in their free time to help the local community. They believe this would benefit both the individual teenager and society as a whole.*

*Do you agree or disagree?*

Many young people **work on a voluntary basis**, and this can only be beneficial for both the individual and society as a whole. However, I do not agree that we should therefore force all teenagers to do **unpaid work**.

Most young people are already **under enough pressure with** their studies, without being given the added responsibility of working in their spare time. School is just as demanding



as a full-time job, and teachers expect their students to do homework and exam revision on top of attending lessons every day. When young people do have some free time, we should encourage them to enjoy it with their friends or to spend it doing sports and other leisure activities. They have many years of work ahead of them when they finish their studies.

At the same time, I do not believe that society has anything to gain from **obliging** young people to do unpaid work. In fact, I would argue that it goes against the values of a free and fair society to force a group of people to do something **against their will**. Doing this can only lead to **resentment** amongst young people, who would feel that they were being used, and parents, who would not want to be told how to raise their children. Currently, nobody is forced to volunteer, and this is surely the best system.

In conclusion, teenagers may choose to work for free and help others, but in my opinion we should not make this **compulsory**.

**(250 words)**

### **Các cụm từ cần nhớ**

- work on a voluntary basis: làm việc không công
- unpaid work: công việc không công
- be under pressure: bị áp lực
- oblige(v): ép buộc
- against one's will: trái với ý nguyện của ai
- resentment(n): sự phẫn nộ
- compulsory(adj): bắt buộc



## ESSAY 10

*Some people regard video games as harmless fun, or even as a useful educational tool. Others, however, believe that video games are having an adverse effect on the people who play them. In your opinion, do the drawbacks of video games outweigh the benefits?*

Many people, and children in particular, enjoy playing computer games. While I accept that these games can sometimes have a positive effect on the user, I believe that they are more likely to have a harmful impact.

On the one hand, video games can be both entertaining and educational. Users, or gamers, are **transported into virtual worlds** which are often more exciting and **engaging** than real-life pastimes. From an educational perspective, these games **encourage imagination and creativity**, as well as concentration, logical thinking and problem solving, all of which are useful skills outside the gaming context. Furthermore, it has been shown that computer simulation games can improve users' motor skills and help to prepare them for real-world tasks, such as flying a plane.

However, I would argue that these benefits are outweighed by the drawbacks. Gaming can be highly **addictive** because users are constantly given scores, new targets and frequent rewards to keep them playing. Many children now spend hours each day trying to **progress through the levels of a game** or to get a higher score than their friends. This type of addiction can have effects ranging from lack

of sleep to problems at school, when homework is sacrificed for a few more hours on the computer or console. The rise in obesity in recent years has also been linked in part to the **sedentary lifestyle** and lack of exercise that often accompany gaming addiction.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the potential dangers of video games are more significant than the possible benefits.



(258 words)

### Các cụm từ cần nhớ

- be transported into virtual worlds: được đưa đến những thế giới ảo  
engaging(adj): thu hút
- encourage imagination and creativity: khuyến khích tính tưởng tượng và sáng tạo  
addictive(adj): gây nghiện
- progress through the levels of a game: lên level game
- sedentary lifestyle: lối sống trì trệ

### ESSAY 11

*Some people think that in the modern world we are more dependent on each other, while others think that people have become more independent. Discuss both views and give your own opinion.*

People have different views about whether we are more or less dependent on others nowadays. In my view, modern life forces us to be more independent than people were in the past.

There are two main reasons why it could be argued that we are more dependent on each other now. Firstly, life is more complex and difficult, especially because the cost of living has increased so dramatically. For example, young adults tend to **rely on** their parents for help when buying a house. Property prices are higher than ever, and without help it would be impossible for many people to pay a deposit and a mortgage. Secondly, people seem to be more **ambitious** nowadays, and they want a better quality of life for their families. This means that both parents usually need to work full-time, and they depend on support from grandparents and babysitters for child care.





However, I would agree with those who believe that people are more independent these days. In most countries, families are becoming smaller and more **dispersed**, which means that people cannot **count on** relatives as much as they used to. We also have more freedom to travel and live far away from our home towns. For example, many students choose to study abroad instead of going to their local university, and this experience makes them more independent as they learn to live alone. Another factor in this growing independence is technology, which allows us to work alone and from any part of the world.

In conclusion, while there are some reasons to believe that people now depend on each other more, my own view is that we are more independent than ever. **(279 words)**

### **Các cụm từ cần nhớ**

- rely on(phrv): phụ thuộc vào
- ambitious(adj): tham vọng
- dispersed(adj): phân tán
- count on(phrv): dựa vào



## ESSAY 12

*Nowadays celebrities are more famous for their glamour and wealth than for their achievements, and this sets a bad example to young people. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement?*

It is true that some celebrities are known for their **glamorous lifestyles** rather than for the work they do. While I agree that these celebrities **set a bad example** for children, I believe that other famous people act as positive role models. On the one hand, many people do achieve fame without really working for it. They may have **inherited** money from parents, married a famous or wealthy person, or they may have appeared in gossip magazines or on a reality TV programme. A good example would be Paris Hilton, who is rich and famous for the wrong reasons. She spends her time attending parties and nightclubs, and her behaviour promotes the idea that appearance, glamour and media profile are more important than hard work and good character. The message to young people is that success can be achieved easily, and that school work is not necessary.

On the other hand, there are at least as many celebrities whose accomplishments make them excellent role models for young people. Actors, musicians and sports stars become famous idols because they have worked hard and applied themselves to develop real skills and abilities. They demonstrate great effort, determination and ambition, which is required for someone who wants to be truly successful in their chosen field. An example is the actor and martial artist Jackie Chan, who has become world famous through years of practice and hard work. This kind of **self-made celebrity** can inspire children to develop their talents through application and **perseverance**.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the influence of celebrities on young people can be positive as well as negative.

**(271 words)**



### Các cụm từ cần nhớ

- glamorous lifestyles: lối sống xa hoa
- set a bad example: tạo ra tấm gương xấu
- inherit(v): thừa kế
- self-made celebrity: người nổi tiếng tự thân
- perseverance(n): sự kiên trì

### ESSAY 13

*Some people think that strict punishments for driving offences are the key to reducing traffic accidents. Others, however, believe that other measures would be more effective in improving road safety. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.*

People have differing views with regard to the question of how to make our roads safer. In my view, both punishments and a range of other measures can be used together to promote better driving habits.

On the one hand, **strict punishments** can certainly help to encourage people to drive more safely. Penalties for dangerous drivers can **act as a deterrent**, meaning that people avoid repeating the same offence. There are various types of driving penalty, such as small fines, **licence suspension**, driver awareness courses, and even prison sentences. The aim of these punishments is to show dangerous drivers that their actions have negative consequences. As a result, we would hope that drivers become more disciplined and alert, and that they follow the rules more carefully.

On the other hand, I believe that safe driving can be promoted in several different ways that do not punish drivers. Firstly, it is vitally important to educate people properly before they start to drive, and this could be done in schools or even as part of an extended or



more difficult driving test. Secondly, more attention could be paid to safe road design. For example, signs can be used to warn people, speed bumps and road bends can be added to calm traffic, and speed cameras can help to **deter people from** driving too quickly. Finally, governments or local councils could reduce road accidents by investing in better public transport, which would mean that fewer people would need to travel by car.

In conclusion, while punishments can help to prevent bad driving, I believe that other road safety measures should also be introduced.

**(269 words)**

### **Các cụm từ cần nhớ**

- strict punishments: những hình phạt nặng
- act as a deterrent: như một tác nhân ngăn cản
- licence suspension: thu bằng lái
- deter sb from doing sth: ngăn cản ai khỏi việc làm gì

### **ESSAY 14**

*The older generations tend to have very traditional ideas about how people should live, think and behave. However, some people believe that these ideas are not helpful in preparing younger generations for modern life. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view?*

It is true that many older people believe in traditional values that often seem **incompatible with** the needs of younger people. While I agree that some traditional ideas are **outdated**, I believe that others are still useful and should not be forgotten.



On the one hand, many of the ideas that elderly people have about life are becoming less **relevant** for younger people. In the past, for example, people were advised to learn a profession and find a secure job for life, but today's workers expect much more variety and diversity from their careers. At the same time, the 'rules' around relationships are being **eroded** as young adults make their own choices about who and when to marry. But perhaps the greatest disparity between the generations can be seen in their attitudes towards gender roles. The traditional roles of men and women, as **breadwinners and housewives**, are no longer accepted as necessary or appropriate by most younger people.

On the other hand, some traditional views and values are certainly **applicable** to the modern world. For example, older generations **attach** great importance to working hard, doing one's best, and taking pride in one's work, and these behaviours can surely benefit young people as they enter today's competitive job market. Other characteristics that are perhaps seen as traditional are politeness and good manners. In our globalised world, young adults can expect to come into contact with people from a huge variety of backgrounds, and it is more important than ever to treat others with respect. Finally, I believe that young people would lead happier lives if they had a more 'old-fashioned' **sense of community and neighbourliness**.

In conclusion, although the views of older people may sometimes seem unhelpful in today's world, we should not dismiss all traditional ideas as irrelevant. **(299 words)**

### Các cụm từ cần nhớ

- be incompatible with: tương thích, phù hợp
- outdated(adj): lỗi thời
- relevant(adj): liên quan
- erode(v): xói mòn, làm ăn mòn
- breadwinners and housewives: trụ cột gia đình và người nội trợ
- applicable(adj): áp dụng được



- attach(v): gắn với
- sense of community and neighbourliness: tính cộng đồng và tình làng nghĩa xóm



## ESSAY 15

*In some countries, people are forced to retire when they reach a certain age. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?*

Compulsory retirement is common in many countries when members of the workforce reach 65 or 70, and this has both advantages and downsides, as will now be considered.

The main advantage of requiring people to leave their job at a certain age is that it provides opportunities for younger members of staff to join the **workforce**, often meaning that companies benefit from having lower wages to pay for the new recruits and also having younger, potentially more **dynamic** employees. This in turn could well give the company the required **boost** to continue being profitable.

Another advantage is that some older people may choose to keep working more **out of habit** than enjoyment, and therefore a **mandatory** retirement may encourage them to enjoy their life more, having the free time to **engage in** hobbies and interests such as gardening, which they may not have previously had time for up to that point.

Yet there are significant disadvantages in forced retirement. Older staff members often have more experience, and may have no desire to leave their job. Requiring them to leave could mean a skill shortage for the company as well as a **feeling of discontent** from the employee. Added to that is the rising number of older people and the subsequent **drain** on resources if they are not working; if there are more elderly people on pensions or other benefits, the increased tax burden **falls on** the younger generation.

In conclusion, there are both social and economic benefits in allowing older people to remain in employment if so desired, so compulsory retirement would not be recommended.

**(266 words)**



### Các cụm từ cần nhớ

- workforce(n): lực lượng lao động
- dynamic(adj): năng động
- boost(n): lực thúc đẩy
- out of habit: vì thói quen
- mandatory(adj): bắt buộc
- engage in: tham gia vào
- feeling of discontent: cảm giác bất mãn
- drain(n): sự chảy ra, sự mất đi
- fall on: đổ lên

### ESSAY 16

*Teenagers are spending an increasing amount of time on the Internet, and this is having a negative effect on their social skills.*

*Do you agree or disagree?*

It is not uncommon these days for younger people to spend an hour or more a day online, and although this does **detract from** time spent taking to family members, it is not necessarily affecting their social development as will now be discussed. The primary reason to disagree with the statement is that a considerable amount of time that youngsters are on the internet is actually spent on **social networking sites** such as Facebook. As these sites are specifically designed for social purposes, the argument that social skills are declining would appear to be **invalid**. It is only when the time online is spent playing single player games or generally surfing for entertainment without interacting with others online that this could be considered **unsociable**.





In addition, an increasing dependence on the Internet for a broad range of tasks from completing homework and studies to checking bank balances and searching for employment means that being online is often simply an alternative manner of working or completing necessary chores, and should not be considered related to social skills at all. Admittedly, if too much time is spent online playing games or looking at websites, then there is the potential for **surfers** to become less able to interact with people directly. However, this can be negated by ensuring that time online is limited to a reasonable amount, and can even be controlled by using technology that actively records the amount of time online.

To sum up, it is not that the Internet is causing us to become less sociable, it is simply that the nature of social interaction is changing.

**(267 words)**

#### **Các cụm từ cần nhớ**

- detract from: làm chệch hướng, làm xao nhãng
- social networking sites: các trang web mạng xã hội
- invalid(adj): vô lý
- unsociable(adj): không giao tiếp xã hội
- surfer(n): người lướt web



## ESSAY 17

***Some people believe teenagers should focus on all subjects equally, whereas other people think that they should concentrate on only those subjects that they find interesting and they are best at. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.***

The debate over whether teenagers ought to allocate equal attention to all academic subjects or solely focus on those they find intriguing and excel in is a contentious one. This essay will explore both perspectives, ultimately endorsing the latter viewpoint, which emphasizes specialized focus based on individual interests and strengths.

Advocates of a balanced educational approach argue that an equal focus on all subjects is essential for the comprehensive development of young minds. This perspective emphasizes that a broad curriculum exposes students to a diverse array of knowledge, fostering well-rounded individuals. It cultivates a versatile skill set, enabling students to tackle various challenges and adapt to changing circumstances in the future. For instance, excelling in both humanities and sciences ensures that a student develops both analytical and creative thinking abilities. This approach also prevents premature specialization, allowing teenagers to discover and explore their interests thoroughly before making pivotal career decisions.

Conversely, many, including myself, believe that teenagers should prioritize subjects that captivate their interest and align with their innate abilities. Focusing on areas of strength and passion not only boosts academic performance due to heightened engagement and motivation but also fosters deeper learning and expertise. Specialization can lead to early professional development, providing students with a head start in their future careers. A student passionate about mathematics, for instance, would benefit more from intensifying their focus in this area, potentially leading to innovations or advanced studies in mathematical fields. This tailored approach respects individual differences in interests and aptitudes, promoting personal and academic fulfillment.



In conclusion, while evenly distributing academic efforts across all disciplines can create well-rounded individuals, concentrating on subjects that align with one's interests and strengths offers profound benefits in deep learning and personal satisfaction. The latter approach, which I advocate, respects individual uniqueness and can lead to significant achievements and fulfillment in students' chosen areas.

## ESSAY 18

*Some people suggest that the government should spend money putting more works of art like paintings and statues into towns and cities to make them attractive places. To what extent do you agree or disagree?*

The proposal to utilize government funds for the incorporation of artworks such as paintings and statues in urban areas, with the aim of augmenting their allure, has gained support in recent years. While I recognize the underlying rationale of this perspective, I argue that other facets of urban development should take precedence over enhancing the attractiveness of these areas.

Indeed, there are valid reasons to advocate for government-sponsored art in cities. Artistic installations in public spaces can dramatically transform the aesthetic and cultural landscape of an area. They serve as symbols of cultural identity, reflecting the history and values of the community. Art in public spaces also provides accessibility to cultural experiences for a broader demographic, breaking down the barriers of traditional art galleries and museums. Cities like Barcelona, adorned with Gaudí's architectural masterpieces, exemplify how art can become a cornerstone of urban identity and appeal, drawing tourists and locals alike.

However, the appeal of urban areas relies on more than just aesthetic enhancements. Crucial aspects like infrastructure, green spaces, and public services play a pivotal role in



making cities livable and attractive. Efficient public transportation systems, well-maintained parks, and quality public services are fundamental to the daily lives of residents and can significantly impact a city's appeal. For instance, the attractiveness of cities like Vienna and Copenhagen is not just thanks to their artistic heritage but also their emphasis on high-quality public services and sustainable urban planning. Therefore, while art can enrich urban spaces, the allocation of government funds should prioritize these essential elements that directly impact the quality of life and functionality of a city.

To conclude, although the integration of art in urban spaces has its merits, I maintain that government funding should be more strategically directed towards improving fundamental urban infrastructure and services. These elements are crucial in enhancing the overall attractiveness and livability of towns and cities, far beyond the aesthetic contributions of art alone.