

SPM

ENGLISH CONTINUOUS WRITING

Argumentative Essays

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Argumentative Essays

1. Co-curricular activities are a waste of time. Do you agree?

Co-curricular activities are non-academic activities and conducted outside the classroom. Co-curricular activities cover a wide range of activities from sports or athletics to uniformed societies.

Some people feel taking part in co-curricular activities is a waste of time, but I think there are many advantages in participating in these activities.

Firstly, uniformed units such as Girl Guides, Boy Scouts and the Red Crescent Society teach their members basic survival skills. This enables their members to be prepared for any tough situation later. These uniformed organizations also contribute a lot to the society each year through donations and social work. Those active in such units learn to be caring and helpful towards others. Furthermore, societies such as the Red Crescent Society teach their members first aid which will become handy when someone is injured or requires immediate medical attention.

Through group activities, members learn to respect and co-operate with one another. Many members are also given a chance to head an activity or a group project. In this way their leadership skills are honed. These leadership skills are important after they leave school and starts working because they have to deal with different types of people.

Besides the uniformed units, students can choose whatever club or society they are interested in. Clubs such as the Drama Club or Maths Club enhance their members' ability in those particular fields. Doing well in co-curricular activities is important because many employers do not only look at academic qualifications alone. Students active in co-curricular activities show their potential employers that they have extra abilities acquired outside the classroom.

Sport is also a part of co-curricular activities and can improve or maintain one's health or well-being. People who participate in sports are more active. Therefore, participating in sports also ensures better thinking skills and alertness in the classroom. Sports such as swimming and athletics build stamina and keep the body fit, so that the person will not fall sick so easily.

Sports also instil discipline in students. Those who take part in sports have to stick to a daily timetable and watch what they eat. They are required to listen to their coaches attentively.

In fact, sports and other co-curricular activities help to develop strong character, promote basic moral values, instil discipline and independence and respect for peers and elders which cannot be found in any textbook. Because of the factors given above, I strongly disagree that taking part in extra-curricular activities is a waste of time.

2. Friendship is more important than money. Do you agree?

It is difficult to decide which one is more important - friendship or money. This is because both are equally important. However, I think that we can live without money but not without friends. What is the point to have a lot of money but without friends.

Good friends are hard to find. They are with us all the time to support, love and care for us. Friends are also good listeners. They lend us their ear and shoulder to cry on when we are down. It is important for everyone to have friends because when we are feeling sad, we can always share our problems with them. They will always be there to console us and try to help us to solve our problems.

Although money can make life comfortable, it is only a means to material things. We may still be unhappy even though we have everything that we want. We can have big houses, luxury cars, priceless jewellery and overseas vacations all year round but we will still be unhappy if we do not have friends. It will not be fun to enjoy our wealth alone.

We need friends to share our happiness and life experiences with us. We will not be alone or lost if we have friends. We can do many things with them, especially if we share the same interests and hobbies. We can also share our experiences with our friends, even if it is an embarrassing experience because true friends are always loyal to us and they do not judge us. True friends are good companions and accept us for who we are.

True friends also remain our friends no matter how poor we are. However we must be careful because money sometimes attracts the wrong company. Some people may want to be our friend if we have material wealth. Their friendship is not genuine. If we are no longer wealthy, these friends may go away. They will not be there during our bad times but true friends will be there with us regardless of our financial status. True friends will help and provide us with moral support to help us during bad times.

Therefore, there is no doubt that friendship is more important than money. Friends can give us support, love and care, whereas money can only provide us with temporary happiness through material things. Furthermore, we can live without having a lot of money but we certainly cannot live without friends.

3. Keeping pets is good. Do you agree?

Pets are animals which we rear, love and nurture. Whether it is a dog, a cat or a bird, pets make our life interesting. They can become our companions when we are lonely.

Pets are useful. Dogs can guard our homes. They can see and smell any strangers who may be lurking nearby. It makes us feel safer in our homes. Cats are also useful because they can help us keep our homes free from rats and mice. Furthermore, cats are also very cuddly and playful. Rearing fish is also beneficial. It can provide us with an inexpensive way to relax. Fishes are decorative, and it is very calming to watch the colourful fishes swimming in the aquarium.

Keeping pets is also beneficial for children. Children can be given the responsibility of feeding and keeping the pets clean. This trains them to be responsible caregivers. They learn to be independent and less self-centred by caring for the pets. They will learn how to love and be kind to animals. This will teach them to be generous, kind and caring people when they grow up.

It is highly recommended for childless couples to keep pets. Pets can bring them closer by sharing the responsibility of taking care of the pets. Pets also provide companionship when either one of the couple is not around. Pets can also enrich the couple's life by providing them a special kind of relationship as well as a hobby. Couples who have dogs can take their dogs out for walks together or play fetch in the park.

Dogs can help some people with disabilities with their daily tasks. Those who are visually impaired keep guide dogs to help them get around. These guide dogs will go everywhere with their owners to guide and protect them. Others who are paralysed train their dogs to help them around the house like to fetch the newspapers or mails.

We must have some responsibilities when keeping pets. Pets must be adequately fed. This is not a difficult task because pet food is quite cheap and it is easy to prepare. Dogs and cats can be fed with biscuits which come in packs and are ready-to-eat. Fish foods also come in the form of flakes or biscuits which require no preparation. We must also provide a comfortable place for them to stay.

Keeping pets brings us a lot of joy and benefits. We get to share our lives with our pets and enjoy their company. Pets also add a new dimension to our lives. These are the reasons why I think keeping pets is good.

4. Nuclear Energy – Good or Bad?

Although coal power is the main provider of electricity, many parts of the world rely on nuclear energy to supply electricity. Nuclear energy has different benefits that make it a better alternative than coal power, but this source of power has its

The process of producing nuclear energy requires atoms to be split to produce heat. The heat is used to turn water into steam. The steam will then spins a turbine of a generator that creates electricity. This process is what makes the uranium radioactive which is harmful to all living things. When a nuclear plant explodes or burns down, the harmful radiation is exposed into the air and can harm living things as well as contaminate water.

Countries like Germany and France are rich in uranium and they can remain self-sufficient with their power supply and keep costs down by not having to import elements from other countries. Another major benefit of using nuclear energy is pollution free. Nuclear power plants emit no carbon dioxide or other pollutants into the air. It never contributes to global warming as well.

However, producing nuclear energy seems to have more disadvantages than advantages. One of them is radiation poisoning which affects the body. Its initial symptoms include nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, fatigue and anorexia. Most fatalities caused by radiation exposure are due to extremely large radiation exposure. The Japan is a good example.

Also, one of the largest economic drawbacks to nuclear energy is its steep price. Nuclear reactors are multibillion-dollar capital project, with new ones expected to cost in excess of billions of ringgit to construct. This is due primarily to the greatly increased cost of labour and materials.

The storage and management of nuclear waste has also been a problem plaguing the nuclear industry. The waste products of nuclear fission have a half-life measured from decades to centuries making their management very much a long-term prospect. The storage and handling of nuclear waste has not been without incident. Containment failure led to increased incidents of leukemia and other symptoms of chronic radiations poisoning.

Therefore, it is very clear that nuclear energy poses more problems than benefits. Those countries that already use this form of energy must step up efforts to ensure that all possible precautions have been taken to prevent an nuclear accidents such as Russian Chernobyl incident from occurring.

5. Is Academic excellence guarantees success? Discuss

Does academic excellence ensure a successful life? To answer this question properly, we must know how a successful life is viewed.

To materialistic people, a successful life is the accumulation of great wealth and a lot of property. They say that the more money and property a person has, the more successful he is.

However, people with a spiritual turn of mind think that a successful life is living happily, harmoniously or contentedly with other people. Many university graduates fail to fulfil the conditions of either these two definitions of a successful life. Firstly, a person who has graduated from a university does not necessarily have a higher income than a person who has not stepped inside one. The average salary of a university graduate is around RM2 000 a month. This is a minuscule amount compared to what hawkers earn. Many hawkers or roadside-stall operators who may have dropped out even from primary school would consider it a failure if they earn less than RM3000 a month. If we measure success by the size of one's income, then the hawkers and vendors are clearly more successful than the graduates.

If we consider the spiritual version of a successful life, many university graduates are also failures. Their lives are filled with disharmony and discontent. They live in constant conflict with their fellow-men and they are highly discontented with their lot in life. So, these people fail to fulfil even the spiritual conditions of a perfect life. Many lowly-educated people are the opposite of the graduates. They live in happily, harmony and contentment with their fellow-men and their environment. This goes to show that having academic excellence does not necessarily bring happiness or success.

Academically, there is no denying that a person who has passed out of university is more successful than one who has not. However, we all know that is not what we mean by a successful life. We view success in life in a different way.

Therefore, in order to be able to answer the question whether a academic excellence guarantees successful, we have to know what people mean by success. Is it material success, is it spiritual success or is it academic success? If we view success as a material or spiritual achievement, academic excellence does not give the slightest advantage to anyone. Only in academic success is a person with a degree superior to one who does not have one.

6. Should school students be given a mobile phone? Discuss.

Mobile phone has become a fashionable trend especially among the younger generation. Nowadays, the function of a mobile telephone is no longer limited to just a communication tool but more. We get to use it to send text messages, play games, take photographs, play music, record sound and videos and so on. The list goes on and on with the help of software and technology. In fact, it is believed that mobile phones will continue to evolve and become an inseparable part of our life in the near future.

The use of mobile phones among students, however, has raised a lot of questions and debate among society. Many believe that students should not be using mobile phones because it causes distraction and students will lose track of their responsibilities. Students who frequently use mobile phone will not be focusing in their study thus their grades will slip tremendously. Although such belief has yet to be proven statistically, life of a student who has plenty of tasks to juggle with already, should not be further complicated anymore with the use of a mobile phone.

Students who often use mobile telephone with its many features tend to misuse the gadget if they are not properly guided. They may send or forward useless messages when they are bored, take pointless photographs for fun, play meaningless games on the phone just to kill time and basically defeat the whole purpose of owning a phone in the first place. Parents usually are willing to purchase a mobile phone for their school-going children just to keep in contact but if they realize that the phone is going to be misused in such a manner, perhaps parents would think twice before doing so.

Besides that, there are also concerns over health hazards caused by the use of mobile phones. Possible outcomes believed to be connected to the use of mobile phone include cancer, brain tumor, migraine, lowering of immunity level and so on. Scientific studies have been conducted numerous times to prove the statement but so far the result has been inconclusive. Nevertheless, we should all be careful with the excessive use of mobile phone because we can never be too careful when it comes to our health and safety.

All in all, technology like mobile phone should not be treated as a threat but a convenience. However such convenience must never be misused or it could bring upon negative consequences. Students, especially, ought to practice moderation and self discipline when it comes to the use of mobile phone because they should be aware that their responsibility should never be taken over by any form of over indulgence.

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