UNIT 1 – IDENTITY

Writing task model answer

"Some people believe that your personality doesn't change over time. To what extent to do you agree with this idea? Give specific examples to support your opinion."

The nature versus nurture debate has continued for many years. Some people claim we have our personality from birth and it does not change. However, I would suggest that personality is not fixed. It changes over time.

Studies on a variety of participants have confirmed that several variables can change personalities. It is certainly true too that when people meet again at reunions they often notice that friends or coworkers have changed as they have matured. This may be because they are influenced by other people or their own circumstances and experiences throughout their lives. These can make them more or less confident or modest, for example.

There is also evidence that people can train themselves to be different. For this reason companies often invest in training programs to make employees more extroverted, more thinking or more feeling towards others, for instance.

Other factors can also affect personality in temporary and permanent ways. For example, experiencing trauma means people tend to become more nervous, or more introverted. However, counseling and medical treatment can help reverse this, so the effect on personality is often only temporary. Other medical conditions, such as Alzheimer's Disease[1], can have a dramatic and more permanent outcome and consequences for the personalities of the sufferer and others.

In conclusion, personality is connected to our genes[2], but these do not define us. Environmental factors mean that as humans we can and do change throughout our lives. Because we have scope for change, we are also able to train ourselves and improve when this is desirable.

Comments

The essay answers the question well and the student presents and supports their opinion successfully. The student shows evidence of clear organization and awareness of essay structure, uses appropriate vocabulary related to personality and research, and successfully includes reflexive pronouns and various forms of *other*.

1 a serious illness affecting your brain that makes it difficult for you to remember things and becomes worse as time passes.
2 a pattern of chemicals within a cell that carries information about the qualities passed to a living thing from its parents.

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UNIT 2 – DESIGN

Writing task model answer

"Discuss some advantages of handmade products over machine-made products. Use specific reasons and examples in your answer."

In many countries, big-box stores[3] and supermarkets selling mass-produced goods are dominating the economy. Artisans are being replaced by factories, with machines and robots mass-producing goods. However, there are several advantages of handmade products, both for the consumer and the people who make and sell them.

One major benefit of handmade pieces is that they are unique. Factory-made products can be generic. Two bowls from a superstore may be functional, and of good quality, but will be identical. Two bowls made by the same artisan can be entirely different depending on their mood, environment, and materials. Many people value these unique features, and will pay extra for them.

Not only does the customer enjoy handmade goods, the craftspeople can benefit too. Handicrafts[4] provide jobs for the artisans. Factories creating mass-produced products can often harm the community by replacing people with machines, taking away these jobs.

Finally, entire communities and societies can benefit from handmade goods. Buying these products can enhance the local economy. The profits from the sale of handmade goods can often stay in the local area, rather than going to a large manufacturing company, which may be in a different location, or even overseas. Such handicrafts are also part of local or even national culture and buying them can help the unique skills and traditions to survive.

In conclusion, machine-made products can certainly have advantages. However, in my view, there are more advantages of handmade products, especially for local artisans and communities. It is important that we value and preserve this important aspect of culture.

Comments

The piece presents and supports a variety of arguments clearly and logically. The introduction and conclusion are both clear. The student uses *can* to express general truths, and makes good use of adjectives to describe products.

3 a large shop that sells a lot of different types of goods including food, medicines, and often things such as washing machines
4 beautiful objects made by people using their hands

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UNIT 3 – THOUGHT

Writing task model answer

"Which is more important in the workplace: emotional intelligence or intellectual intelligence?"

In an increasingly competitive job market, skills are becoming more important in all workplaces. As each job is different, so too are the specific skills needed. This means in some jobs emotional intelligence is more important than intellectual intelligence and vice versa[5].

Emotional intelligence is vital in jobs where employees predominantly deal with other people. Being rational and dealing with people with different points of view and different emotions is important in jobs such as nursing and human resource management. In the same way, it is important in any job where the person has to strengthen relationships with customers or clients, such as sales. Equally, there are jobs where encouragement and reducing anxiety for others is perhaps the most important skill, like teaching or training.

However, although these skills are important in many jobs, in some cases intellectual intelligence is more important, because employees need to focus on projects and meeting deadlines rather than on people. For instance, researchers work alone for the most part. Instead of dealing with people and emotions, they need to hypothesize, be logical, sort and interpret complex data, or work with abstract concepts. Similarly, most artisans or engineers need time alone to concentrate and be creative or solve problems. These employees need to maximize the time they spend on their work, not focus on their relationships with others.

In conclusion, the ideal candidate for many jobs has both emotional and intellectual intelligence. However, as shown, there are also many jobs where one form of intelligence will be needed more than the other.

Comments

The essay is well-structured, and it shows evidence for both sides of the argument. The student uses appropriate vocabulary, language for comparing and contrasting, and adverbs for hedging where necessary.

5 the opposite of what has been said

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UNIT 4 – FIRE

Writing task model answer

"Preventing campfires from causing wildfires is a major challenge. What are some reasons for this? What can be done to solve this problem?"

Forest fires have become a perennial problem in many parts of the world, especially over the last few decades. Small campfires can start large forest fires because of human and natural acts, but these large fires can often be prevented by awareness, supervision, and regulation.

Campfires can threaten forests in two main ways. First, nature can play a role. Very small sparks from the fire may spread, rapidly setting fire to any dry vegetation nearby. Similarly, winds blowing flames from the fire into trees can have grave consequences if the bark and leaves are very dry. Second, human errors can also have serious effects. Failing to supervise a fire can mean it gets out of control, and failing to extinguish it properly can cause it to spread.

Acknowledging these issues, federal and local governments have acted to remedy the situation, and avoid costly and dangerous errors. Educating children and adults about the risks and action to take in case of fire has become a priority. Launching[6] public information and advertising campaigns on television and putting up large warning signs in parks and forests have raised awareness of the issues. Introducing regulation such as laws banning fires at certain times of the year, and employing rangers[7] to monitor campers and enforce these laws have helped keep fires under control.

Forest fires are certainly a pressing issue. The consequences of inaction can be devastating for wildlife, vegetation, and communities. However, the problem can be solved with awareness, supervision, and also common sense.

Comments

The essay answers the question clearly, discussing both problems and solutions and supporting arguments. The student used vocabulary from the unit, gerunds, and reduced clauses appropriately and correctly.

6 to start a major activity such as a project
7 someone whose job is to take care of a forest, national park, or state park

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UNIT 5 – MOVEMENT

Writing task model answer

"The two maps show an existing city and proposed changes for the next ten years. Summarize the information by selecting and reporting the main features. Make comparisons where relevant."

The character of the 50 square kilometer area is set to be completely transformed in the next ten years.

It is projected to be much greener because more grass and trees will be planted, and many of the parking lots are due to be replaced by green spaces. The lake will remain a green zone, but part of the land around it will be made into a fenced playground. There will be a path to and from it, and street lighting will be put in. The other green space will also remain, but the path and the fence will be removed.

Opposite the lake, the three stores will be demolished and replaced with one large store with a small parking lot. The houses by the lake and all of the factories will be torn down, and a large new hotel with a paved[8] driveway will be built on each side of the main road.

The primary transport links are the three roads, which will all be paved and trees will be planted along each of them. For people who do not drive, an alternative form of transportation will be the new railroad.

Comments

The piece compares the maps and describes the most important changes well. The student has used the unit vocabulary and the future passive appropriately, and also used level-appropriate language to describe future plans.

8 covered with a hard, smooth surface

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UNIT 6 – DISEASE

Writing task model answer

"How important is it for countries to fund research into disease?"

Disease is one of the major reasons for death and economic loss worldwide. All national governments have to try to tackle this issue. One of the main ways most governments can do this is by funding research.

Funding research can help both prevent and treat disease. Research can show the reasons for the transmission of disease and can therefore help prevent it. When researchers found proof that polluted water supplies resulted in cholera, for instance, effective water treatment systems were introduced, and the number of infected people fell dramatically. Similarly, researchers have developed vaccines against diseases such as polio, which used to be widespread but has been virtually eradicated in some countries. Unless such research continues, diseases such as HIV and cancer may never be prevented. Equally, research can help develop treatments for those who have already contracted these diseases, preventing suffering and even death.

There are many risks of not funding research. Lives may be lost because of disease, and the economy may also suffer as a result of the sick leave people take, and the cost to the healthcare system. However, such research is expensive, and not all countries are able to afford to fund it themselves. Consequently, there is a duty on the wealthier nations to fund research and share the benefits with countries which cannot afford it.

Ultimately, there is a moral duty on governments to protect citizens, and to prevent the costs that disease brings. Provided they can afford it, it is essential that all governments fund research into disease.

Comments

The essay is a well-balanced cause and effect analysis, with plenty of examples to support the piece. The student uses a range of language to express cause and effect, relevant vocabulary to describe disease and research, and *unless* and *provided* accurately.

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UNIT 7 – SURVIVAL

Writing task model answer

"This graph compares trends in animal populations. Write a summary describing the trends and give reasons for the changes."

The chart shows a comparison of numbers of four species of animals in one region of Africa in 1960 and today.

The number of some animals has been falling. There were 12,000 wild dogs in 1960, but there are 33% fewer today. There were 20,000 lions initially, but there is currently only one tenth that number. These substantial declines may have been due to hunting, either to control pests[9] or for trophies[10]. Another threat could have been urbanization and loss of habitat.

However, this drop in numbers is not inevitable, and not all the species have been dying out. The number of zebras has remained at 15,000, and growing numbers of rhinos suggest they have been thriving. There were only 2,000 at first, but there are six times as many now. This might be attributed to official protection of both species and their habitat in order to preserve diversity.

Comments

The student summarized and compared the trends clearly, and inferred reasons for the changes using language correctly. Vocabulary from the unit and the present perfect progressive have both been used appropriately.

9 animals that damage plants or supplies of food
10 something that you keep as proof of an achievement that you are proud of, for example a part of an animal that you have killed

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UNIT 8 – LAW

Writing task model answer

"Should employees speak out if their colleagues are unethical?"

Most employees have been witness to unethical conduct at some point, but speaking out against colleagues takes considerable courage. This essay will argue that although it is hard, employees must speak up when they see illegal or unethical conduct, to ensure safety, and financial and political security.

It could be argued that coworkers should be loyal to each other. When they see unethical conduct, it is not their responsibility to act. Their employer or the justice system should deal with the issue.

However, it is often essential that employees themselves report activity which goes against a company, institute, organization, or government's code of ethics. In some cases, this ensures safety. Many more air accidents would have occurred if the aviation industry had not introduced laws requiring pilots to speak up when they had concerns about coworkers, for instance.

In other cases, employees should speak up to protect economic interests. It can be argued that some financial crises could have been prevented if people working in the sector had spoken out. Investigations would have happened sooner, and people's jobs and savings would have been protected.

People in positions of political power should also report colleagues who abuse their position. This would mean investigation and punishment of leaders who act unethically. It would prevent controversy and scandals and maintain stable and legitimate[11] government.

In conclusion, all employees have a duty to speak out when they see unethical conduct, but this can be very hard. Employers should create a culture of transparency[12], where ethical behavior and honesty are rewarded.

Comments

The piece argues a point of view well, presents opposing views, and uses structures to support an opinion effectively. The writer accurately uses the unreal conditional in the past and makes good use of the unit vocabulary.

11 allowed by the law, or correct according to the law
12 an honest way of doing things that allows other people to know exactly what you are doing

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UNIT 9 – SOUND

Writing task model answer

"How has technology affected the types of relationships people have? Has this been a positive or negative development?"

Technology connects us. We can now meet and maintain relationships with more people than ever. This essay will argue that as relationships have changed, these developments have not always been positive.

There are many benefits of this interconnected world. Prior to the invention of the computer and the smartphone, relationships were built face to face, and maintained by slower or more expensive forms of communication like letters or telephone calls. Technology means we can now have relationships with new kinds of people, or keep old friendships alive over long distances. We can have global networks of friends cheaply and easily, through things like email, Skype, and social media.

However, many believe this change in relationships is a negative phenomenon. 'FOMO', which stands for 'Fear Of Missing Out', means people are using their devices to communicate more and more, thereby ignoring others who are physically present, and often missing out on what's happening in the world around them. Some people even claim we are losing the ability to interact face to face, which is incredibly sad. Many people criticize social media and the harmful relationships it creates. Friendships can be based on unreliable information, as users can lie or present a dishonest impression of themselves. The trust which is needed in relationships can also be lost if friends post information or photographs without permission. Even more seriously, users can use social media to abuse relationships, by bullying or harassing others.

Technology certainly dominates relationships. It affects who we meet, how we meet them, and how we maintain the relationship. This has benefits, but we now need to manage it carefully to minimize the risks.

Comments

The piece answers the question clearly, each point is explained and supported well. The student uses unit vocabulary and relative clauses well, and varies sentence length in explanations.

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UNIT 10 – TOMORROW

Writing task model answer

"There are more challenges and risks than benefits to new technology."

Technology is revolutionary. It has introduced new ways of doing things, and made some things and processes obsolete. This essay will argue that while there are risks, the benefits outweigh these.

Some people are concerned technology will threaten our way of life. By the next century, many jobs will have disappeared as technology will have automated[13] many workplaces. Technology may also be dangerous. Robots may exhibit high levels of intelligence and outsmart[14] humans, putting them at risk. Technology use may harm humans in other ways too, causing damage to the eyes or other parts of the body. There may also be devastating effects on the environment from increased energy use and waste. As well as these dangers, because technology develops so quickly, there may be other risks which we cannot predict yet.

However, there will definitely be considerable benefits to technological advancement. By the next century, automation will definitely have led to greater workplace efficiency. This will allow humans to focus on thinking, creating, and interacting, which they do more effectively than machines, and allow people more leisure time. It will also have improved safety, as machines do not get tired or make dangerous mistakes. Technology will also have lowered costs, and even helped tackle issues such as poverty, because technology often means goods can be produced cheaply. There may also be benefits which we cannot predict yet.

In conclusion, there are certainly moral and practical challenges with new technology. However, we will be able to derive much greater benefits from it. These benefits far outweigh any risks.

Comments

The essay contains persuasive arguments that clearly answer the question, and show the writer's perspective and stance. The writer uses unit vocabulary, such as science nouns, well, and also fluidly integrates the future perfect simple.

13 to change a factory, office, or process so that machines do the work instead of people
14 to gain an advantage over someone, especially by using a clever or dishonest trick

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