

Exemplification

Sample introduction

Everyone knows the disappointment of a **favorite possession** wearing out, breaking, and falling apart. As disappointing as this experience can be, it is also unavoidable. It is the way the universe works: any organized system eventually runs down, breaks, and ceases to function. It is called the Second Law of Thermodynamics, popularly known as “entropy.” This natural decline happens to everything unless people put time and effort into maintaining the system. This is true of both physical systems (like machines and our bodies) and non-physical systems (like relationships and societies). Any system left to itself will eventually wind down and stop working. Even when we do try to maintain that system, there is only so much we can do, and the irresistible force of entropy eventually wins out. **Three of my possessions** that illustrate the principle of entropy are **my car, my house, and my computer**. (An alternate thesis might be, “Some of my possessions illustrate the principle of entropy.”)

Sample Body Paragraph

One of my possessions that shows entropy is my car. One part of it that wears out is the tires. For example, it seems that I put new tires on it just last year, and they have already worn to the point of being unsafe. Another part of my car that wears out is the windshield wipers. For instance, here in the desert, the sun destroys them so that they need to be replaced even before they are used for the rain; then when it does rain, I can't see to drive. The ones I just replaced didn't last more than six months. The last part of my car that wears out is the battery. Again, the desert heat, combined with the heat under the hood, makes batteries wear out fast. They are supposed to last five years, but mine never make it past two. It seems that the things that go wrong with a car most often are the things one depends on the most.

Cause/Effect

Sample Introduction

We are all motivated do what we do by a variety of **causes**. We get up and go to work in the morning because we have to pay for a place to live, food to eat, and a car to drive. Some pursue advanced degrees so they can get a better job and afford “nicer” things or do more things for people. Most of the time, we respond to the motivations that lead us to better things. However, we can also be motivated to do things that are not beneficial, like using illegal drugs. **Three causes** of illegal drug use are **peer pressure, stress, and curiosity**. (An alternate thesis might be, “Illegal drug use has some very common causes.”)

Sample Body Paragraph

The **first cause** of illegal drug use is **peer pressure**. One way that peer pressure results in illegal drug use is that it makes one feel inadequate. For example, in one situation, new members of a gang who were reluctant to take drugs were accused of not being able to control them the way the established members could. Because their “weakness” jeopardized their membership in the gang, they decided to take the drugs to prove that they were just as capable as the established members were. Others are made to feel the need to “fit in.” For instance, a clique in a particular high school required anyone who wanted into the group to get high on LSD; those who valued membership in the group had to ignore all of the “common sense” warnings from parents and doctors about the dangers of using hallucinogenics just so they could be like everyone else in the group. Finally, some are challenged to prove their worth by doing things that they know are stupid. In one situation, a gang required initiates to get high on heroin “just once,” when everyone knows that one use can lead to addiction. However, because they really wanted to be part of the gang, they gave in to the challenge. The desire to be accepted can make people do things that they don’t really want to do.

Division/Classification

Sample Introduction

One cannot go to the store and buy a package of friends, but friends can be sorted into various “packages.” We all have different kinds of friends whom we identify by their characteristics. We can look at their attitudes, hobbies, occupations, sizes, shapes, sense of humor, cars they drive, etc. We tend to group our friends based on characteristics that they share. Three kinds of friends, based on attitude, are happy friends, sad friends, and angry friends.

Sample Body Paragraph

The **first kind** of friend based on attitude is the **happy friend**. One happy friend is Joe; it seems that no matter how bad things get, he is always smiling. For instance, last week on his way to school, he was stopped by a train, got a flat tire, and arrived late for his first class; however, when I talked to him, he greeted me with a smile and laughed, “I am having an adventurous day!” Another happy friend is Miguel, who can always find something good in every situation. For example, last spring the battery in his car died and he had to buy a new one with money he had been saving for a special project. Instead of complaining about having to postpone the project, he said, “Well, it will be good to have a new battery for summer. Imagine if this had happened in August!” Finally, James is a happy friend because he won’t let anyone make him angry. For instance, the other day, someone came up to him and started blaming him for something that was not his fault. Rather than becoming angry and defending himself, he just smiled and said, “Thank you for your opinion; have a nice day,” and walked away whistling. Happy friends are those who **don’t let circumstances affect them adversely**.

Process

Sample Introduction

Not many homeowners like to do large maintenance jobs around the house. Cutting the grass, washing the windows, sweeping out the garage, etc. are weekend chores that have to be done, but they are usually not difficult or dangerous—just routine. Occasionally, in addition to these aesthetic chores, one has to tackle more heavy-duty chores that relate to keeping the house structurally sound. These chores can be dangerous as well as difficult and are better left to professionals. However, if professionals are not available and a substantial repair has to be made immediately, the homeowner has to tackle it. Even without special training or skills, the homeowner can usually accomplish major repairs if he plans his work carefully and follows a specific process, as in fixing a leaky roof. In order to stop a roof from leaking, **first**, clean all of the debris off of the roof; **then** find the leak; **finally** patch the leak with a good roofing sealer.

Sample Body Paragraph

The **first step** in stopping a roof from leaking is to **clean** the roof thoroughly. Before one can start cleaning the roof, he has to gather all of the equipment he will need. For example, a ladder is obviously necessary, as are a stiff broom, some kind of scraper for stubborn debris, a garden hose, and a good pair of gloves. Once all of the equipment is gathered and arranged near a convenient place to climb onto the roof, it's time to get up there and start the cleaning process. Begin by sweeping the bulk of the debris off of the roof. Any debris that won't come off with sweeping will have to be scraped off, but don't damage the shingles in the process! Finally, remove any leftover dirt by lightly hosing off the roof. This needs to be done carefully for two reasons: it will enable one to see and inspect any damage to the roof, and not getting the roof too wet at this stage will make it easier to find the leak later. Cleaning off the roof is the dirtiest part of the job, but unless this is done first, the leak will never be fixed.

Comparison/Contrast

Sample Introduction

In the movie Casablanca, Rick and Captain Renault express nobility **differently**. The story takes place early in World War II, when everyone in Europe who still had an ounce of freedom tried to escape Hitler's onslaught. Many among the refugees and among those who stayed behind sacrificed much in an attempt to thwart what most people considered an evil plot to rule the world. Those who were willing to sacrifice in order to overcome Evil and ensure that Good would be forever enthroned displayed nobility—the willingness to do the right thing, no matter how much it costs. There were, of course, different ways of expressing nobility, and those who took advantage of the war for their own advancement didn't express it at all. Rick and Captain Renault express nobility **differently in character, goals, and treatment of others.**

Sample Body Paragraph (partial)

One way in which Rick and Captain Renault express nobility differently is in their character. One aspect of character-related nobility that is different between them is the willingness to stand up for principles. For example, Rick is willing to risk his security in order to avoid any association with the Germans. He shows this in the scene in which he refuses to allow a German into his gambling room. The German threatens to report him to the law, but Rick doesn't care. Captain Renault, on the other hand, will do whatever it takes to gain security; he is always trying to appease the Germans so that they will treat him well. This is clear in the scene in which he finds Rick drinking by himself in the café. First, when Rick complains that Renault's men really messed up his café looking for the letters of transit, Renault says that he told them to be extra destructive because that impresses Germans. Then, after refusing to answer Rick's question about his loyalties, he says that he had better go flatter Major Strasser. Another aspect of character-related nobility that is different between them is the willingness to help someone in need just because the person is in need. . . .

Narration

Sample Introduction

Playing with matches as a child taught me the importance of knowing my limitations. It was a dry, mild summer day in Southern California, and, being a boy of eight, I was filled with the sense of adventure. I had recently become fascinated with the scientific mystery of matches. Of course, as a child, I would not have put in those terms; it was just amazing to me that something so hard and so cold could instantly produce something so hot and so airy. I was also curious as to how the fire from the match could be transferred to other materials and began to wonder about how fast different materials would accept the flame. The warm weather outside and my burning curiosity inside enticed me to perform some experiments. Little did I realize the enlightenment that awaited me. **Lighting a match, starting a fire, and trying to put out the fire taught me** while I was still young the **importance of knowing my limitations.**

Sample Body Paragraph (partial)

Lighting a match was the first thing that made me begin to consider my limitations. It was summer, no school, nothing but free time to explore my environment. And, there was much to explore. We lived on a dead-end street in a new housing project, with a vacant lot at the west, “dead,” end of the street and another at the opposite end where the road curved left from the south and became our block. There were five houses on each side of the street, and at that time, there were no fences dividing the back yards. We lived in the second house from the west end of the block, on the north side of the street. It was a short walk across the neighbor’s dry and dusty back yard to the empty lot, so I started out on my scientific adventure with a brand new book of “borrowed” matches in my pocket. In the lot, near our neighbor’s property line, was what seemed at the time a gigantic hole. It was easy enough to get into and out of, but once in it, I could stand up to my full height and not see over the edge. That, of course, meant that no one could see me, either. Perfect! I took the matches from my pocket and squatted down next to some dry weeds and grass that were in the bottom of the hole. I tore out a black paper match and held it tight against the strike pad on the book. . . .

Definition

Sample Introduction

The term “team player” clearly comes from the world of sports and indicates someone who is a member of any given team. From the local Pop Warner and little league teams to the NFL and professional baseball, every team is made up of players who do their parts to make the team successful. The basketball player who has a chance to shoot and increase his point percentage will pass the ball to another player who will take the shot if that’s what the play calls for. That last point (making the team successful) gets at the heart of a universal application of the term. A “team player” is not just a member of the team, but one who thinks of the team first and does his best, even if it means putting his own “glory” aside, to help the team win. Whatever the context, the team player follows the “coach’s” instructions and sacrifices himself for the good of the team. This attitude is not limited to sports, but can be seen in any context in which people work together to achieve a common goal. The **team player attitude** can be seen in **business, school, and families**.

Sample Body Paragraph

The **first area** in which the team player attitude is seen is **business**. When a sales team is trying to break a sales record to help the company go public and be much more successful, the team members focus on the good of the company and not their own advancement. Each member of the team is given a particular assignment: research, marketing, making contacts, closing deals, keeping records, charting progress. The team player concentrates on completing his assignment as effectively as possible; even if he has the opportunity to make a large sale on his own and earn a sizable bonus, he will not be distracted by it but will turn the sale over to the member in charge of sales. When a company is trying to cut costs in order to be more profitable, the employees cooperate by conserving office supplies, limiting phone use, taking shorter lunch breaks, and working longer hours for the same pay. For example, the company depends on sales to stay in business and does much sales work over the phone, but instead of making a long distance call to make a “possible” big sale and get a commission, the team player will call only those prospects he is sure will respond favorably, even if the sale will be small. The company wins only if the team wins, and that goal supersedes any personal profit.

Argumentation

Sample Introduction

Have you ever wondered why some people call the concept of evolution “scientific”? One’s first thought might be, “Of course, it’s scientific; all scientists believe that life on earth developed through the process of evolution!” Some may also refer to Darwin’s observations of animal behavior as scientific evidence for evolution; his record of those observations (The Origin of Species) has been accepted by the scientific community as the standard guide for studying life on earth. In addition, one can’t take any science class in public school that doesn’t teach the theory of evolution as scientific fact. However, if one studies the nature of the concept of evolution scientifically, he will find that it may not be as scientific as many people think it is. Although many people think that the theory of evolution is scientific, it can’t be scientific because it contradicts natural law, is based on assumptions, and, in essence, is religious.

Sample Body Paragraph (partial)

The **first reason** that the theory of evolution cannot be scientific is that it **contradicts natural law**. The **first principle** that it contradicts is the **first law of thermodynamics**. The first law states that there is a limited amount of energy in the universe; no more is being created, and none is being destroyed. It may change form (like a piece of wood in a fire turning to ashes and releasing heat), but it is still there. **All scientists know this** and agree with it. Contrary to this, the theory of evolution says that living things developed from a lower species to a more highly developed species, but this would require new energy to provide for the transformation. . . .