EGYPTIAN SCHOLASTIC TEST

EST I – Essay

Student's Name _____

National ID _____

Test Center: _____

Duration: 50 minutes

Instructions:

- Read the directions carefully before writing your essay.
- Use the first 2 pages as a draft, anything written on these pages will not be taken into consideration.

Directions: The following task will assess your skills in critically analyzing a text and reporting your findings in an organized essay. In your essay, you should demonstrate an effective use of the English language with a clear and well-structured analysis. Off-topic essays will not be scored.

You have 50 minutes to read the source text, analyze it and write an organized response.

Read the following passage and take into consideration how the author uses:

- Evidence, such as relevant examples, to justify the argument
- Reasoning, such as rhetorical questions, to show logical connections among thoughts and facts
- Rhetoric, like sensory language and emotional appeals, to give weight to the argument

Imagine how it feels to be in a place where you do not feel welcome. Now imagine that you go to that place five days a week, 7 hours a day. You roam the halls, looking for a kind face only to be met with bustling noise, crowded corridors, and unforgiving faces. The more that time passes, the more you feel that you are falling faster down a dark abyss. Shoulders shove you aside without a second glance, and you feel more and more invisible every day. This blend of emotions is a glimpse into the daily onslaught many students face when attending high school. Feelings of isolation, loneliness, and misery are only a glance into the many aspects that drive students to drop out of school. Although it may seem like the perfect solution in the heat of the moment, the long-term effects of dropping out can be deleterious to both a young adult's mental and physical well-being.

Dropping out of school is characterized by the decision to end one's education before receiving a high school diploma. According to Bustamante (2019), the dropout rate in the United States in 2007 was 3.5% compared to 4.7% in 2017. These statistics include ages 15 to 24 and the last two years of high school. Bustamante (2019) states that "5.4% of males between age 15 and 24 were dropouts in 2017 [and] 5.9% of females between age 15 and 24 were dropouts in 2017." According to the World Bank (2020), the male dropout rate in Lebanon begins as early as grade 1 at 4.49% in 2017. With such drastic numbers that seem to affect both males and females, what are the reasons that cause a student to opt out of his or her education?

Choosing to leave school before graduating is not a new phenomenon. In fact, there are articles dating back to the 1950s that discuss the increased concern with students choosing to leave school early. Dunn, Chambers, and Rabren (2004) state that "the importance of a high school education has changed dramatically over the past 50 years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). In the 1950s, the attainment of a high school degree was considered a valued asset in the labor market, whereas in the 2000s, it is considered essential for accessing further training, education, or the labor force (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001)." That being said, a high school degree holds more value than ever before especially since it opens doors to future opportunities. One of the reasons proposed by research to cause students to drop out is school climate. According to Kotok, Ikoma, and Bodovski (2016), a school should be held accountable for dropout rates especially in terms of the school's norms, structure, and values. These factors can include bullying among peers or even from teacher to student. Another aspect that prompts students to leave school is their economic and ethnic background. Research says that students from underprivileged backgrounds have a higher tendency to not continue their education.

Taking all of the above into consideration, students need be wary before deciding to stop attending school. This is not to belittle the difficult and emotionally draining decision a young adult is forced to make, but the long-term effects may be, in fact, detrimental. High school dropouts experience a large negative impact on their mental health. Furthermore, without a high school diploma, those same young adults will find it difficult to get a stable job with proper benefits in order to sustain a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. That is because they lack the proper skill set or specialization that may require a degree in higher education. In terms of the United States, Amos (2009) states that "the national unemployment rate for high school dropouts in July 2009 was 15.4 percent, compared to 9.4 percent for high school graduates, 7.9 percent for individuals with some college credits or an associate's degree, and 4.7 percent for individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher."

Therefore, due to these alarming study results, it is essential to pose the following question: what role can schools and parents play in helping keep their children in school? Despite the on-going research, public and private institutions still have a long way before solving, controlling, and implementing a sustainable strategy for this crisis.

Write a response that demonstrates how the author makes an argument against students dropping out of school and its long-term effects. In your response, analyse how the author uses at least one of the aspects from the essay directions to develop a logical and persuasive argument. The aspects can also be from your own choosing. Make sure that your response directly cites relevant features of the source text.

The focus of your response is not on the quality of the source text, but rather on how the author makes an argument to persuade readers.

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Please write your essay here

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