

Cooperation

The study of conflict and cooperation has been an enduring task of scholars. The issue can be evaluated on both a global scale and an individual one. The question of the efficacy of cooperation vs. that of conflict can be judged in many contexts. In some situations, it can be argued that cooperation benefits all parties involved. In other situations, however, the competition or conflict between different parties may lead to a more productive environment. As a result, the implications are broad and should be considered in the context of our lives.

Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about cooperation.

Perspective One

When individuals or even larger groups or organizations cooperate, society benefits in the end. The synergy resulting from the cooperation greatly outweighs the conflicts that may occur from the collaborative process.

Perspective Two

While conflict is generally associated with negative impacts, there can be positive consequences as well. Conflict can raise awareness of what is important and inspire creative solutions that otherwise might not have materialized.

Perspective Three

Whenever there is collaboration, there is conflict. Competing interests and values can poison collaborative efforts and grind progress to a halt. Whenever people work together, they should attempt to minimize conflict in order to ensure success.

Essay Task

Write a unified, coherent essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives on the idea of cooperation and conflict. In your essay, be sure to:

- analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
- state and develop your own perspective on the issue
- explain the relationship between your perspective and those given

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of the others, in partial agreement, or wholly different. Whatever the case, support your ideas with logical reasoning and detailed, persuasive examples.

Planning your essay

Your work on these prewriting pages will not be scored

Use the space below and on the back cover to generate ideas and plan your essay. You may wish to consider the following as you think critically about the task:

Strengths and weaknesses of the three given perspectives

- What insights do they offer, and what do they fail to consider?
- Why might they be persuasive to others, or why might they fail to persuade?

Your own knowledge, experience, and values

- What is your perspective on this issue, and what are its strengths and weaknesses
How will you support your perspective in your essay?

Ethics

As children, we learn from our parents that it is wrong to lie, cheat, and steal. As we grow up and enter into the real world with some knowledge of right and wrong, we see first hand the importance of ethics, but we also see the nuance and complexity of ethical decision making. The role of ethics in our society becomes more apparent in our adult lives, but how it is applied to each decision can be unclear. Given the importance of ethical conduct and the breadth of differing ethical views, it is worth considering what role ethics should play in our personal and professional lives.

Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about ethics.

Perspective One

We should strive to act in accordance with our personal ethics at every moment. The most important consideration in any ethical situation is whether the decision harmonizes with our personal ethical views; there should be no exceptions.

Perspective Two

While a strong moral compass is indispensable for all members of society, we must realize that not all situations can be broken down in to strict “right and wrong” viewpoints. We should consult our own ethical intuitions while appreciating the complexity of situations.

Perspective Three

There are as many opinions about what is “ethical” as there are individuals. What is “right” varies not only from person to person but from situation to situation. To act “ethically” could mean so many disparate things that it ultimately means nothing.

Essay Task

Write a unified, coherent essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives on the complexity of ethics. In your essay, be sure to:

- analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
- state and develop your own perspective on the issue
- explain the relationship between your perspective and those given

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of the others, in partial agreement, or wholly different. Whatever the case, support your ideas with logical reasoning and detailed, persuasive examples.

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How will you support your perspective in your essay?

Short Cuts

It is incredibly tempting to find an “easy way” to complete many assignments given to us. In some situations, it appears as if taking the “short cut” might be more effective than carrying out a long and mundane list of steps to achieve the same result. Advancement of society depends upon efficiency and economy of resources. However, an emphasis on economy inevitably leads to a reduction in quality. Given the increasingly rapid development of society and the erosion of the appreciation for quality, it is worth considering whether the most expedient solution is always the preferable one.

Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about short cuts.

Perspective One

The most expedient and economical solution to any problem is the superior one. Regardless of the specific task, the correct course of action is the one that follows the path of least resistance.

Perspective Two

Given that our global economy depends heavily on growth and increased production, the only way forward is to favor expediency and economy. Dwelling for too long on a problem or committing excessive resources to it will stifle production and impede economic growth.

Perspective Three

Decisions favoring the “easy way out” are detrimental. Regardless of the situation, the best solution is the one that solves the problem by prioritizing safety and the general advancement of the human race. Short cuts in the short term cause problems in the long term.

Essay Task

Write a unified, coherent essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives on the idea of short cuts. In your essay, be sure to:

- analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
- state and develop your own perspective on the issue
- explain the relationship between your perspective and those given

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of the others, in partial agreement, or wholly different. Whatever the case, support your ideas with logical reasoning and detailed, persuasive examples.

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