

IDEAS 25

**International Online Teachers Society
Debate
Educational Materials For
Advance and Upper Intermediate
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



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THE 25TH INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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FRIENDS FOREVER

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Every individual has and beholds a particular person who is very close to his heart and shares an intimate and long lasting relationship making them friends forever. Time is no essence to them for they are oblivious of the time that passes by as they build their relationship and bond with each other with a brotherly love. They spend more time together which makes them so much inseparable from one another. Most of the time they are in constant touch with each other to the point that they won't be able to last a day without just even saying "hello" to each one of them. They just simply want to be assured that everything is fine and well with each other.

Friends are proven to be a most important part in a person's life. They come and go in our life and sometimes they can make us laugh or even cry. Almost always they make you happy that is why it is imperative to have not only a great friend but we should also have a group of close friends surrounding us. Friends are someone you can also rely on to celebrate a special moment of your life. A great friend is and will always have a spare time to share with you. They are someone who is laudable, for you can see them not only in good times but also in bad times. During tough times they are still visible and will always be there for you through thick and thin. You may see them every day, once a day or less and might hardly see them at all. When this happens, they make it a point to get in touch via telephone or cellphone, letter or email and even online. I can attest to this because one of my best friends has already migrated to the USA, but she is still in constant touch with me. Being distant from each other did not hamper nor hurt our friendship. Instead it was even more tried and tested through time and has made us closer to one another. To date, after so many years of being apart, we might even end up putting a business together in spite of the distance between us.

But through it all, the most important and greatest thing that a friend can do is to love you for who you are and what you are. It does not really matter how you look or what clothes you wear but what matters is what's inside of you that counts. It is the actions that they show and demonstrate which are essential, whether it is big or small, to show you what kind of a friend they truly are. They stick around when things get rough. True to their words, friends will always be friends no matter what. I guess you will all agree to the fact that they can never be forgotten. No matter how near or distant our friends are from us, they will always occupy that special place in a person's heart and they will remain as our FRIENDS FOREVER.

Questions for discussion:

1. What do you think makes a great friend? Why?
2. Have you experienced sharing memorable moments with a friend?
3. Can you sensitively tell a friend what you really think?
4. Can you really be a true friend who can be trusted? How?
5. How do you show what kind of friend you truly are?



A TRUE FRIEND

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In this inconceivable world we live in which is full of travesty, it is seldom and sometimes hard to find a true friend. Being a great friend is not just confined with having a good time with others but it is also about your willingness to put that friend of yours first and foremost in your set of priorities. Can you be sensitive enough to tell your friend what you really think? Or would you rather just shrug your shoulders off and tell him that everything is okay and fine between the two of you. Are you also ready to put your friend's needs above your own? If that is the case, you are on the road to being a true friend in the real sense of it.

There is more to it than just being a true friend. Being a true friend is to be candid enough to tell your pal that you don't always agree in his choices and preferences. It is not just going with the flow but also being honest and impartial to tell your friend what you think is right and pinpoint his wrongdoings. That means you can tell the truth and not offend him at the same time. How can we then identify and be able to distinguish what makes a true friend?

A true friend is someone you can trust and at the same time does not judge you. He is someone you can rely on no matter what happens because he will support you in all your endeavors. He will never let you down but will always consider how you feel and therefore not hurt your feelings intentionally nor deliberately. A true friend will always treat you with respect and kindness. He loves you for who you are and not what he wants or expects you to be. You cannot only enjoy his company but you can also depend upon his loyalty. He is not only dependable but also trustworthy for a true friend will always talk with candor and not hide the truth from you even when it hurts. He acts in a subtle manner in revealing things with you and will criticize you constructively. He is not only someone who can laugh, smile and cry with you but will always stick around through thick and thin. He will always be there for you through tough times and when things get rough.

The one true friend will lend an ear whenever you whine or complain and most especially whenever you are troubled. He is always ready to listen to whatever you will say. Yes, he will accept you for what you are and will give you so much room to change for the better. A person can never do without a friend because they are an integral part of your life and they make you feel so special and important. They are friends whom you can cherish all the days of your life to love and behold. Can you now describe your closest, most-valued true friend?

Questions for discussion:

1. How do you show importance to a true friend?
2. How can you distinguish a true friend?
3. Is your friend worth living for? Why or why not?
4. What are the qualities that you like in a friend?
5. Are you in the right company of friends? Explain your answer.



CHARMS AND STYLES OF FRIENDSHIP

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George Washington once said “True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity, before it is entitled to the appellation”. Perhaps you would examine yourself and find out why is it in a slow growth wherein you truly believe yourself that your relationship to your friend should pace in accordance to the track you're heading on. But did you ask yourself on how do you choose your friend? How are your friends come along in your comfort zone? It is a fact that there are different kinds of friends that surround us. Friends are the ones who will support you aside from your family. No matter what people say about the friends you have or the friendship you care, it is still the substance of your friendship that guarantees, that leads, that flows to its final and truthful designation. These substances would measure the depths of your relationship to your friend and friends. There are unexpected moments that would come which definitely bring the troubles, the hardships the quarrels and the like. A genuine friendship should be strong and cannot be easily broken.

We can precisely tell that animals are such wonderful creatures, as they ask no questions. Humans and animals have been known to have a special bond with each other ever since. As the famous saying reminds ‘A dog is a man's best friend’. The relation that we share with animals is a very warm and protective one. There are many factors that would matter when we try to see and view the different shades of friendship. There is a shade that would give us comfort or a shade that would darken our path to our endless journey. It is hard to conclude and prove that a friendship is real. The moment you establish a friendship to someone is not an essential proof that this partnership is true. It would take a long time to blend the blows of the wind to prove it. Maybe you have experienced a certain situation wherein you were not in good terms to somebody among your friends. It's because there are conflicts. It's because there are misunderstandings. It's because there are disagreements. And much more, there are arguments and differences of opinions and ideas. Can you visualize the framework of friendship you are taking of? There are sometimes on and off situations, highs and lows experiences and left and right decisions. An understanding friend is always at peace and calm. He doesn't react negatively. A doubtful friend is always undecided. He doesn't say anything that is sure of. A coincidental friend comes unexpectedly. His acquaintance is uncertain. A mutual friend is familiar. He is common among friends. A truthful friend never tells lies. He holds the truth of knowledge and wisdom. A good friend has a good heart. He is kind and noble. A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out according to Walter Winchell. He is brave and courageous. A kind friend is nice and understanding. He is thoughtful. However, a fake friend is an impostor. He pretends and deceives. He speaks insincerely. A snobbish friend is a social climber. He believes and admires people of high rank or social class, and dislikes those in a lower class than himself.

We are aware and really tend to meet new people day in and day out but out of those various people, we tend to be friends with only those who share some similar dreams, ambitions, traits or attitudes. As time grows and passes by with trust, with convictions and faithfulness, some people get really close to each other and remain true friends. Even if they are far from you, they stand up for each other in times of need and provide full support of encouragement and guidance when you lose confidence in yourself. The fact that different people have different temperaments and manners, forms and styles, hence make different types of friends, we spend many nights, we observe many days and we ask many questions in order to blend our style and charm as far as friendship is concerned.

Questions for discussion:

1. What is friendship? Use your own ideas/opinions to support your answer.
2. What is your ideal friend?
3. How do you measure a true friend? Give an example.
4. Why do we need to establish a true friendship?
5. Give an insight from this saying “Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are”.



MY BEST FRIEND

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Linda and I were best friends. We had a lot of things in common and shared our deepest secrets with each other. We also had stood next to one another at hard times that no one on earth could have ever done for one's sake. She wasn't just a friend to me; she was my soul mate and my only sister that my parents couldn't get. I was more than happy to have her in my life, and she as well, but when circumstances roam over, no human can defeat the nature of life. So, I lost her forever.

It was a beautiful winter day, the rain was dropping softly and the air was encouraging us to run and play outdoors as if knowing it would be our last winter together. Also, our exchange of words implied that we might never see each other ever again.

Linda was holding her darkest secret behind, which I had never known of until it was too late. I felt her awkwardness on that day, but she knew how to act in a way to stop me from suspecting her of any abnormalities happening within her and her attitude. After the rain stopped dropping, we went inside to change our clothes and to drink hot chocolate with marshmallows. She went in first as I was preparing the hot drinks and talking to mum, then I followed in. As I was changing and washing up, I was expecting her to be sitting with mum and drinking the chocolate. I went to the kitchen counter and grabbed the two mugs and asked mum about Linda as I sat next to her. She didn't see her coming from the inside rooms. I took it normally and continued chatting with mum for around twenty minutes when I decided to look for her. I called her name and searched the rooms, but she was nowhere inside the house and even not outside our house.

I thought she was fooling around or having a private talk, but I couldn't hear the ring of her cell phone as I buzzed her several times. I felt bad and angry until her mum called us at 8 pm asking about her. I was surprised! Then freaking out! I asked dad to go looking for her as did her parents. After 9 pm, we called the police and we had a long night of search until I collapsed and my parents had to send me to the hospital.

The search went on for months and then to two years. Everybody gave up. The police had anticipated that she ran away since she was in my house safe and sound. Her parents blamed mine and we lost contact with Linda and her family.

She was never out of my mind, and I was always hoping she returns to me and justifies her sudden disappearance, but years have passed and now I am married with three kids. Nothing.

One day a man in the public park, where I usually take my kids to play, asked me if I were Sally, Linda's best friend. I did not know how and what to reply at first, but I said 'Yes' almost subconsciously. He sat next to me and told me the story of her disappearance. I might have stayed glaring at him for five minutes with tears rolling down my cheeks and told him before walking away: "May you burn in hell!"

Questions:

1. What is your definition of a 'best friend'?
2. How do you make friends?
3. Are most of your closest friends online or offline? Why?
4. What do you think has happened to Linda?
5. Do you think Linda is a good friend? Explain your choices.



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