

IDEAS 26

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



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



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THE 26TH INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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INSPIRATION IN VARIOUS FORMS

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Many people excel in what they do because of inspiration. Inspiration comes in many forms. Some people find inspiration in other people who figure a lot in their lives—family, a beloved, a friend, a pioneer in the field, perhaps. For people who serve as an inspiration to others, it is a great honor. However, there are others who say that they are inspired by someone, so they do what they do. They try their best to do as their idol does, but often end up as an inferior copy. They say that the best form of flattery is imitation, but really, imitations often fall flat. What would be better is to have one's own trademark on what they do in order not to be called mere imitation.

There are those who are inspired by a particular event, for instance, a tragedy. Yes, tragedy has often been the springboard that has inspired so many people to act and do what they must. When a person does use events as a touchpad for action, it would be laudable if the action urges him to act in the best way possible. It would be great if the event urges him to become a much better person and to find his own niche in the world. But for those who find a certain thirst for negative actions, such as revenge, for instance, the inspiration is misplaced and the action is always misguided. When we are faced with certain adversity, let that lead us to find ourselves in a much better light. Let that lead us to become a much better person.

There are those who are inspired by a need. This type of inspiration is original, in that it comes from within. For instance, we all try our best in our respective fields because of the need to make a living, a need to be recognized, a need to become what we are expected. Need fuels passion, and passion urges us to act accordingly. Again, this could easily become a double-edged sword, since there are those whose needs are twisted, evil and selfish. Let our needs be pure, our intention devoid of selfishness. Then and only then can the end truly justify the means.

In our quest for inspiration in life, let our hearts speak with conscience. Let us not be misled by the wrong notions and the worst misconceptions. Inspiration should lead us to what is good and true and just. You might say this is very like the inspiration for superheroes, and they are born in the pages of comic books. But wouldn't you say that what truly inspires superheroes is their great love for humanity? And the world is all the better for it, especially a world where children are inspired by the greatness of these superheroes and try to live exemplary lives themselves. Let us be inspired like our children are who equally feel inspired by what we show them.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Who is the one person in the world who inspires you? Why do you feel inspired by this person?
2. Have you ever been inspired by a certain event in your life? Be able to talk about that event in class.
3. Determine the difference between a need and a want. Which of the two inspires more greatly?
4. Did you ever have a superhero as a child? How were you inspired by this superhero?
5. What happens when you lose inspiration? How do you try to get it back? Are you always successful in getting it back?



TO BE OR NOT TO BE....

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Lest those of you reading this are misled that this is going to be a dissertation on Shakespeare's play Hamlet, it is not. Enough has been written about this great man's written pieces, so this writer finds it a great insult to his great genius to even attempt to analyze one of his works.

This is about the great lengths to which we sometimes go to become what we think we should. As early as childhood, we are taken up with particular figures that are highly influential in our lives. It could be a parent, highly successful in his career, who has inspired us to follow in his footsteps. It could be a relative, popular and talented, who has driven us to follow the same path. It could be a teacher, who we looked up to and whom we have decided to emulate. There is absolutely nothing wrong with such scenarios, in fact the world is all the better for those.

Impressionable as they come, children do not as easily discern good from bad as well as thinking adults do. This is why the impressions that they take with them in their growth need to be morally upright and commendable beyond measure.

But as parents, we must not totally shield them from the world; that would be tantamount to putting them in a cage where they dare not come out. We must let them experience what is good, just, and true. But we must also let them have their own share of disappointments and trials, for these are the real factors that teach them the sweetness of victories and successes. How can they know joy if they've never experienced sorrow? How can they savor their victories if they have never known defeat?

Do not choose the battles that your children fight-let them do that. What is essential is to guide them in choosing those battles, and equipping them with the values at home, weapons that they need to face life's challenges. Teach them that the holes they bury themselves in are holes they themselves must learn to get out of. Teach them that life is beautiful, but do not hide life's ugly side from them. If you do this, they will find reason to blame you in the future.

It's difficult for a parent to find the balance necessary to teach our children about life in general. However, it is part of our preordained responsibility to encourage our children to face life squarely. Inspire them to live life as they should, so that they have nothing to regret so many years down the road. Inspire them with the way we live, so that they will become what we dream for them to.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How have your parents inspired you?
2. Why is it difficult to be a parent?
3. Why is it necessary to allow children to experience defeat?
4. What can inspire a child more greatly—success or disappointment? Why?
5. Has there ever been a time when you experienced defeat? How did you deal with the situation?



THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD

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Each and every one of us has the ultimate power to change the world. No matter what our roles in life may be, we have been inherently endowed with a specific opportunity to somehow change the world we live in. It is therefore upon us to find that certain purpose that has been given to us from the beginning.

Most of us go about our daily lives like we normally do. We might be the housewife holding up half of our family's world. We might be the husband trying to earn a living for the entire family. We might be the teacher always trying to impart something new and useful to our students. We might be the world leader doing his best to run a country as it should be. No matter what we do everyday, our roles have a place in this world which no one can ever belittle.

We perform our roles governed by both passion and inspiration. There can not be one without the other. Burning passion without inspiration falls flat. Those who have much passion with no sense of inspiration are bound to fail.

Inspiration imbues passion with meaning. Imagine an artist who loves to paint. If he just indulges in his craft because he loves it, what good is there in that? Will he be able to create masterpieces that have meaning in themselves? He'd simply be wasting time and effort, not to mention paint and canvas, creating things which would be deemed worthless because of their sheer emptiness of meaning.

Inspiration imbues feeling to what we do. Adolf Hitler was all hatred for Jews, and he relentlessly pursued to eradicate them from the face of the earth. Fortunately, he never succeeded despite the fact that he massacred thousands during his reign of terror. If one so devoid of compassion for his fellowman could go about such carnage, imagine what the worst kind of unfeeling individual could do to the world. We could have another anti-Christ if such a person would ever exist, God forbid.

Inspiration should always drive us towards the greater good. Misplaced and misguided inspiration greatly disappoints, and the disappointment is often multi-pronged. There are those who follow a certain teaching because they feel strongly that it inspires them in a multitude of ways not easily understandable to others. But remember that when the world says something is wrong, and when there is a nagging feeling that you also have about what you're doing, it most probably is wrong.

In the end, everything we do should be guided by a purpose, an inspiration. And this inspiration, fueled by the strength of passion, must always lead us to become a better person.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why is it inadvisable to have passion without inspiration?
2. Differentiate passion from inspiration.
3. Do you live life in an inspired and passionate way? How?
4. Do you know of anyone else, aside from Hitler, who was inspired in the wrong ways?
5. What happens when people lose inspiration in life?



LOSING INSPIRATION =DYING

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I had a granduncle (my mother's uncle) who had one and only son. He loved my uncle immeasurably and doted on him like any proud father does. Unfortunately, my uncle passed away in his early 40's, leaving behind his grieving wife and his three children. Barely two months after my uncle's passing my granduncle also died, leaving behind my grandaunt, who has survived her twin losses bravely to this day. The exact year of the death of my granduncle and uncle eludes my memory, but I shall never forget my grandaunt's tearful recount of what had caused the demise of my granduncle—he had lost his inspiration.

My granduncle had lost interest in everything after my uncle died. He lost interest in their business; he lost interest in the things he used to do. He had grown unfeeling and barely able to get up from bed each day. His health failed, and soon enough, the jolly and lively granduncle of my childhood lost himself. Simply put, he lost his joie de vivre, his love for life, his exultation of spirit. In other words, he simply died.

When I lost my own husband, I was merely 37 years old and my late husband was just turning 42. I was left to fend for 7 children. Thank God for family, because mine has been beside itself with everything, doing their best to help us survive these trying times. Thank God for them, because all these years down the road after I lost my husband, they have done everything to make me keep my will to live. Even when I had been afflicted with sickness and the hopelessness of being in between jobs, they never lost faith in me. My mom, my sisters and brother, my in-laws, my father till the day he died, have all been with me. They have inspired me in more ways than I can count.

My children have been my special inspiration, the ones who have given me the joy of living. God knows they're not all perfect; they've got so many imperfections, each one of them. Consider it a mother's jaded eye, but I consider the great things about them as far outweighing those imperfections. I believe they have so much to give to the world and with God's grace and in His perfect time, they will. I believe that the strength that I get each day to face the world anew I derive from them. They are what keep me grounded; they are what let me fly. When all else fails, I will always have them.

My grandaunt still faces life strongly, although age has caught up with her. My mother has been living life strongly too; she has been helping me raise my children capably. Inspiration did not die with the loss of our respective husbands; it grows stronger in our hearts at every waking moment.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why do you think people lose interest in life when a loved one dies?
2. Have you or someone you know lost a person they love? Talk about that situation in class.
3. How can you help someone cope after they have lost someone they love?
4. Why is it difficult to get back to normalcy after losing inspiration?
5. Why is inspiration important in life?



INSPIRATION

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Inspiration is defined by many dictionaries as “arousal of the mind to special unusual activity or creativity”. It is a stimulus, it is an incitement. It urges you to do the right thing for a certain situation. It's the main product of your creative thinking. Whatever insight you have, that gives a nice feeling to work more and develop a certain course of action. It is an imagination and it is a motivation. It can't be denied for a fact that every person is truly inspired when something is conceived by our creative mind. It triggers us to achieve our goals with cleverness and inventiveness, which somehow contributes to produce a good result. Likewise, inspiration is a condition for a particular activity or situation. Our feeling is awakened or provoked to do a certain process. And we follow this emotion because it guides us. We continue being led until the finish line and that's one thing for sure that inspiration has done a lot during the process. If we let go the encouragement or stimulation, it's impossible to reach the dream we're holding on.

Robert Bresson [Notes on the Cinematographer] once uttered "When you do not know what you are doing and what you are doing is the best - that is inspiration". How do you react of this statement? Perhaps you would ask yourself what were the best things you've done without knowing them. Were you inspired? Other people might be the first one to commend about the inspiration we have than our very own – self! Inspiration is a natural occurrence that sometimes we're unaware of it. It comes out silently. But the feeling is good. You feel something nice and breezy. You contain yourself full of energy and cheerfulness. Despite the difficulties you encounter, inspiration comes along and within. You won't even notice the drive and thrust of your adrenaline rush of excitement. You can't avoid being noticed by anybody on how you handle things when you are inspired. It is something that you know inside yourself but can't explain and elucidate the real essence of your patterned stimulus. It is also, then, an overwhelming moment when you put yourself in a comfort zone while drowning the heavy anchor of inspiration towards your determined purpose. However, could you imagine a moment of your life on how do you get an inspiration? It could take a longer time than stressing out the root of your inspiration. It's because you have to consider many things. For example, you should think of the actions done which sparked off from the start. Are these things would be of great help to accomplish them all? Another thing, you should maintain politeness in every situation you take no matter how tough and difficult the process is. Good characters will enhance the undertaking in which you're struggling for.

Whenever we are inspired, let's not forget how to deal with it. A good way of getting inspiration is by looking at others' work. It is different from comparison. It is where you diagnose how you are going to begin a brand new start accompanied by a certain motivation and precisely, of an inspiration. That is where a point of creative thinking would glide a prompted imagination to keep going to achieve goals in a certain manner. Make the most of ourselves to reach the finish line of a particular achievement. Accept the open challenge bringing a great aspiration and a determined motivation. Finally, take the momentum of going and keeping the best achievement in life, through, a pure and sensible inspiration.

Questions for discussion:

1. What is an inspiration? Define using your own words.
2. How does inspiration come along?
3. Why do people regard inspiration as important?
4. When does an inspiration go wrong?
5. Which do you prefer – professionally prepared or genuinely inspired? Why?



INSPIRED

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When was the last time that your adrenalin was on its highest level and you were so perked up prompting you to be at your best in everything that you do, making you so inspired? There is this inert action overpowered by a turmoil thing inside of you which makes you up and going even against all the odds of life. This feeling triggers that creativity inside of you making you so motivated to accomplish a lot of things one after the other. It seems that you are looming over all the things that you can lay your hands on leading you to stand out among your peers and excel in your job or profession. Thus, you become a complete person in your designated field in your own way.

When the going gets tough, it is very important for each one of us to be still composed and be very much productive as well as resilient too. We get so inspired and we are able to bring out the best of ourselves, don't we? Our life has its own ups and downs, but when you realize how precious time is, you would not even let a second slip away just like that. I marvel on how people who are entangled in an imbroglio can still set a benchmark and make a big difference. That intense desire to make things happen is what makes them tick. Their hearts are burning with passion that makes them oblivious of everything that surrounds them.

We are in constant touch with people from all walks of life and we venture into each and everyone's grueling journey and witness our fight for survival. Each to its own depicts a story on how we try to achieve our dreams and be inspired on one's perseverance and endurance to trail that journey of the impossible and stand the tests of time. It all reveals a life of limitless possibility on how we were able to conquer and fight our own battles and all of these make us a stronger person that we are now. We are all motivated by our astonishing inner strength and our super-like physical endurance.

Let us all bank on that hope for us to be inspired and even write our own success story. Strive to reach our goals for us to live the life that we want to live. Life is too short to let it go to waste, so make the most out of it and make our lives worth living. We shouldn't waste any time, so what are we waiting for? Let's try our very best and live life to the utmost, to the fullest. Go on, you can dream, believe, aspire and get inspired to be what the Lord wants us to be.

Questions for discussion:

1. Do we always make use of our time or just dilly dally with it? Justify your answer.
2. How do we motivate ourselves to be inspired in our life?
3. How do you really get inspired into doing something important in your life?
4. Who or what inspires you the most? Justify your answer.
5. How do you describe an inspired person?



BEING INSPIRED – THE HIGHEST EXCITEMENT

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Feeling thwarted by all the things that has been happening lately? Wouldn't it be better to feel the highest excitement of your life by being inspired? Are you baffled by all the frustrations and failures that you have encountered in life? Cheer up and try to trigger your seat of emotion so as to feel excited and be so much inspired in what you are doing now or who you are with at the moment. Brace yourself up and feel the surge of that overwhelming feeling of exuberance inside you!

In whatever state of mind we are in, our feelings are very important for it is pivotal to moving our emotions or prompting our actions which even leads to invention. To feel inspired comes from within our inner soul that sends us off to a kick start to do something in able for us to reach our goal. As a young individual borne of a family, our parents serve as our role models who inspire us to pursue a dream and reach our ambition in life. Almost always if not our parents, there is this someone who creates an impact in our life, stimulating and arousing our feelings and therefore poses to be our inspiration.

The joy that our youth brought us is indescribable, just like during our teenage days up to the time that we practice our profession and raise a family of our own. In all these stages of our life, we get so inspired that we put all our efforts into doing something for the sake of our family. Thus, we put our heart and soul into something in order for us to be a success and achieve the goal that we set before us. There is this sense of belonging and importance because of the fact that we are part of that family. Hitherto, we feel a sense of achievement whenever one of the members of our family accomplishes something. So, we can say then that being inspired is the highest excitement that one feels per se. It drives us to be set towards our goal, dreams and objectives in life. We try our best to be fulfilled not because we chose to but because of that inner passion so intent that you want it and you had to!

Yes, we live and strive hard for our family for they serve to be our inspiration (who cares not to?) We become so inspired that we could do anything just for them to be happy and satisfied. For us, our family is more to it than satisfaction can bring. Who says we can live without them? Our world revolves around them and that we cannot do without them, could you? Then, you might as well agree with me, for in more ways than one, it has been proven and tested that they are the reason why we feel so excited in our life. The fact remains that they give us this highest feeling of excitement for us to be more inspired than ever!

Questions for discussion:

1. Who or what makes you so inspired in life? Why?
2. Have you felt this intense passion of having somebody or something that inspires you?
3. Have you become a complacent person that there is nothing that really neither excites nor inspires you? Explain your answer.
4. Is being inspired crucial in your life? Why or why not?
5. Do you easily give up whenever tribulations come your way that you do not even try to arouse your feeling to be happy and contented in life? Justify your answer.



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