

IDEAS 91

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



International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee



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THE 91st INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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THE IMMENSITY OF PARENTAL INFLUENCE

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Our character is directly influenced by the decisions we make everyday. I have consistently reminded my kids that they are shaped by the choices they make in life. Influence comes from different sources but the outcome remains: those influences eventually become what we are. We are a reflection of those very influences that shape us.

You and I get our earliest influence from our own parents. The way we are raised and the values we are taught to adhere to are what make us what we are now. The young among us may still be in the process of being formed or patterned. They may end up carrying half or all of what influenced them, or they may end up carrying nothing at all. But still, the factors they have been exposed to play a huge role in how they become as adults.

If a child grows up influenced by exemplary values and concepts in life, s/he grows up to be a person who recognizes the beauty of life lived with proper and good perspectives. As parents, we must realize that our children see us as their primary influence on how they are to live their lives. If all our children see are hatred, enmity and bitterness, there's a pretty enormous chance that they'll grow up hating the world and everyone in it and thinking that there's absolutely nothing on earth worth loving or valuing at all.

As a single parent, it's been a really huge challenge to teach all seven of my children about how it is to survive in this world and still have your sanity intact. The world is often insane and not everything goes as planned. Oftentimes, I have found my chances railroaded because of the choices I have had to make. I want to send all of my children to good schools like my late husband would have wanted if he were alive. But as it is, I have had to make the most of the blessings that public school education has to offer to children whose parents are as financially challenged as I am. I have encouraged my children to do their best always because that is the only way they can optimize their education. Not all of them have succeeded at the struggle. One or two of my children could do better if they were able to attend a private school. But trudge on I must with what little I have. I can only pray that my children who've been having problems at this point can somehow find their groove and be encouraged by what their siblings are doing.

I have prayed hard that we will all make it together, influenced by a life of prayer and the readiness to survive no matter what.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Who is/are your greatest influence/s in life? Why is this so?
2. How have your own parents or guardians influenced you?
3. How are you influenced by people other than your own parents?
4. How will you strive to influence your own children?
5. How would you want to be remembered by people around you in terms of your influence on them?



POLITICAL INFLUENCE-GOOD OR BAD?

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We equate influence with power. It is quite accurate to do that since influence can be seen as a manner by which we are able to change what is status quo.

Political clout allows those in power to create either huge or diminutive changes to the world. When you are in a position of power, you are afforded a status not usually enjoyed by those on the opposite side of your spectrum. When a politician gets in line, the queue ceases to exist because that politician is ushered to the head of the line. Very few, if any, politicians would gladly and patiently wait in a line of people to get something stamped, approved or checked. Fewer still are politicians whose willingness to be considered just one among the multitudes supersedes their desire to be considered one of the elite. When one is in a position of power, time is a problem that is not theirs and waiting is a chore reserved only for the layman. Influence is automatically a given because a politician gets things done faster, easier and more readily. Simply put, political influence puts one on a higher plane.

But there are those unassuming officials who do not consider their positions as a way of getting things done as they prefer. There are the rare ones who look at political influence as a way by which they can help their constituents get better treatment or greater notice. And these kinds of people do not stop at just affixing their signatures to endorsement letters; they do follow-ups patiently and aggressively while taking care not to overstep any boundaries or not to put others at a disadvantage. These politicians consider their posts as blessings for the greater good to prosper, where the welfare of their fellowmen comes as an honest priority. The poor, the marginalized, the defenseless in society can approach them freely because their doors are always open for such sectors. What's even nobler is when these politicians do not impose their will on those they extend assistance to by asking such help seekers to vote for them. For this breed of politicians, their position is a means to be of service. They do not find cheap thrill in being recognized for their deeds because for them, the rewards are always greater when something proceeds from the heart. It is not simply because they are in a position to do anything but rather because they are in a position to spread the goodness to those they serve.

Let us pray for politicians and government officials who look at their influence as a means to reach more people, and not as a means to enrich themselves and gain fame and hallow glory.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. If you were a politician in government, how would you use your influence?
2. Why is it not easy to balance influence with humility and a sincere desire to help others?
3. Are there any government officials in your country that you admire for the kind of influence they exert? Be able to talk about such people.
4. What is your opinion on entertainment celebrities getting into politics?
5. How would you want to influence the world?



PEOPLE WHO'VE INFLUENCED ME

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Many people have been strong influences to why I am who I am.

I have had enormous influence from my favorite teachers in grade school. As far as I can remember, my love for English sprang from having had great English teachers. They were always my favorite teachers because they opened up a whole new world of language for me. My teacher in Preparatory school, although she handled all of us in her class alone, patiently oversaw our efforts to form the letters of the alphabet with our tiny hands. My First Grade teacher taught us the rudiments of syllable reading and forming. My Second Grade teacher taught us the more complicated arena of diphthongs and paired consonants. My Third Grade teacher taught us literary appreciation by introducing us to the world of fairy tales. From Fourth Grade, departmentalization meant we had different teachers for every school subject. My Fourth Grade English Teacher introduced us to book reports and theme writing. My Fifth Grade English teacher administered spelling quizzes three times a week and made sure we knew just where to put proper stress on English words. My Sixth Grade English teacher also happened to be our Class Adviser, and she always made sure we followed the rules of the school's English Campaign both inside her class and out.

My father, a teacher, was a huge influence on me, too. He was always a stickler for details and perfection. This has contributed to my insane obsessive-compulsive nature. While others may see this as a disorder, it has allowed me to put things in perspective from the onset and to work hard to follow through to get things done properly. For my dad, trying to get things done by someone else precisely the way you want is impossible. It would be much better and saves a lot of effort and time-not to mention, disappointment-to just do everything yourself. That way, you can have better control of the situation. You are also not beholden to anybody. Moreover, if things don't turn out as you like, you only have yourself to blame.

I prefer to do things by myself and only ask for help when what is before me proves to be beyond me. I do not wish to bother people with my own concerns, and I often hesitate to speak my mind even when I can no longer bear what I see. My tolerance for mediocrity may not always be high, but I respect people who know exactly what they want and how they want things. I may be difficult to work with for some people, but for those who share my insanity, they can be sure of my loyalty.

It's just how I do things and how I have been influenced by those around me.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How have you been influenced by people around you? Be as specific as needed.
2. Who are a child's greatest influences?
3. Who have been your greatest influences in life? How have they influenced you?
4. How can a parent create a lasting influence in a child? A teacher in a student?
5. How can someone who has influenced us greatly prove to be a huge disappointment? Cite specific examples.



INFLUENCING OTHERS - MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THIS WORLD

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How many of us are influencing other people's lives and are really making a difference in this world? You will agree with me when I say that we all have our own special way or ways of being able to influence the people around us. We all play different roles as a parent, a son/daughter, a professional, a writer, a community worker, a superior and many more. This means that we in one way or another play an important role in any person's life. Communicating with these people can really matter a lot and most often than not, we affect each other's lives.

Influencing others can also mean intervention in one's life, allowing us to experience a positive influence on the outlook and level of well-being of a person. The best influence that we can definitely have is on our family, that is, when you create a positive influence on your loved ones. As a parent, it would be an accomplishment if you are able to draw your children to become closer to God and have that holy fear. The best way to influence others is to set the good example so they would follow your footsteps. We, as parents should encourage our children to live an upright life and be good citizens of our country. We should teach them not only to harm others but also be able to instill those good virtues that we have known of like honesty, patience, integrity, loyalty and many more.

If you want to influence others, you must first start with your home so that others may follow too. Our children are the reflection of our personalities and how we bring them up may greatly influence their lives when they have their own families. Communicating with them will mean being assertive in such a way that we are not really commanding them to do such things. Modeling positive behaviors for our children to follow can be one of the best things to do. We can be authoritative parents who are lovingly setting limits for them but not really controlling them excessively. Therefore, we could still show them love and respect when we correct them and not really play as sinister.

In any field that you may want to influence other people's lives, we should always have in mind to consider their feelings and respect their totality as a person. We show them respect when we acknowledge their opinions and ideas and not criticizing them all the time because they also need to be complimented at times. We have to make sure that our choice of words is pleasant because this can be very crucial when you are trying to give them a message. Yes, when you try influencing other people's lives, you are making a difference in this world that we live in.

Questions for discussion:

1. How do you try to influence other people's lives? Explain your answer.
2. How can you make a positive influence with the people around you?
3. Do you create a positive or negative influence with your immediate family members? Why or why not?
4. Do you agree to the fact that when you influence others, you are also making a difference in this world? Justify your answer.
5. As parents, how can we positively influence our children? Explain your answer.





International Online Teachers Society(IOTS) is an independent non profit international organization committed to improving the state of online and offline education in the world by engaging all kinds of language teachers with fluent English speaking skill in the world to shape global, regional and education agendas.
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