

General Comments

Overall, I was quite pleased with everyone's work on the diagnostic essay. I thought you all did a nice job writing clear and quickly (the time limit was definitely a factor, but we've got to make the most of our in-class time together). For the most part, I read cogent, well-organized essays that utilized appropriately formal style and tone. Nice work!

Areas for Improvement

I did notice a few, general areas where I feel like the majority of the class can make some improvements. These are constructive criticisms designed to help make your writing *even* better. I think everyone is already writing well. Now, let's continue progressing together!

These areas include...

1. Consistent use of specific and effective thesis statements and topic sentences
2. Promotion of coherence and cohesion within body paragraphs
3. Consistently "academic" (formal) tone and stylistic conventions
4. A few grammar issues (comma usage, subject/verb agreement)
5. Correct use of articles

An Example Response

Here is an example answer for the diagnostic essay. We will use this for demonstration purposes in class.

You have been asked to write a report for the "Association for Green Sustainability" on the following topic:

What are the greatest threats to the environment in the world today? What are the solutions?

To: Association for Green Sustainability

From: John Kotnarowski

Subjects: Analysis of Environmental Threats & Proposed Solutions

Date: October 20th, 2014

Introduction

Deforestation and the industrial efforts required to support increasingly globalized economies are two of a number of threats facing the well-being of the environment today. This report will describe the two most serious issues facing the environment today, namely, global warming and the proliferation of landfills and will offer possible solutions to mitigate the deleterious effects of said problems.

Global Warming: Causes & Solutions

Global warming is caused by the presence of increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, in the atmosphere. This leads to a rise in average global temperatures which in turn disrupts weather patterns, the melting of the polar ice caps and rising sea levels. To best deal with this threat, world governments must act to impose strict laws limiting greenhouse gas emissions industrial interests.

The Proliferation of Landfills: Causes & Solutions

In addition to the problem of global warming, the world has seen a dramatic increase in the production of waste and the growth of landfills. This situation has many causes: a lack of awareness about sustainable growth and development and the pronounced use of non-biodegradable materials such as plastics. The best way to remedy this issue is again through increased government pressure on waste producers to conform with the tenets of sustainable growth. This can be done through awareness-raising campaigns, legislation and fines for non-compliance.

Conclusion

While the global environmental outlook is beginning to look dire, there are options. Through increased government regulation, the effects of global warming and the proliferation of landfills can be reduced. Small gains today could mean a better world tomorrow. The time to act is now.