

Your instructions: read these two essays. Determine why one essay is better than the other. Hint: it doesn't have anything to do with grammar or spelling.

Instructions that were given to these two authors: write an essay on the theme of "Conscription." For example, should Canada (or should it not) have military conscription?

Riley Green (an example of a good essay)

Conscription Will Promote Desirable Traits in Canadian Citizens

How would you feel if tomorrow you were forcibly called into military service? In Canada, it could happen. It *has* happened. Conscription is the compulsory enlistment of individuals into military service, and Canadians experienced this during both World Wars (Jones). Conscription is possible during peacetime. Canadian citizens would foster better respect of, and compliance with, the country's laws if conscription were to be reintroduced today.

General discipline and public order would improve if Canada adopted conscription. First, the military training process instills respect for authority. In fact, one of the Canadian Force's core tenets is to "uphold Canada's parliamentary democracy and its institutions by [...] respecting the rule of law" (Canada). In other words, the military does not focus on brainwashing people to respect their superiors, but instead strives to encourage its personnel to respect the authority of law. Secondly, people with military training exercise better self-control in problematic situations. A recent poll reports that 65% of soldiers taking military meditation and self-control courses feel "better able to handle stressful situations and [. . . have] improved self-control" (Rochman). With this in mind, it makes sense that when people leave military service, they will continue to carry these skills with them and react better in situations where public order might be breached.

In addition to bolstering discipline and order, conscription would sensitize Canadians to points of law. Military members are more knowledgeable of Canadian law than average citizens. To explain, the Canadian Forces specifically trains its personnel through courses, conferences, and seminars relating to law (Canada). This translates to a population that is aware of what is considered to be right from wrong and reduces the chances of people using ignorance as an excuse to break the law. More importantly, the military encourages its members to be ethical. For example, Lieutenant Colonel Walker relates in an audio interview that Canadian Forces members participate in an army ethics program, "a comprehensive program that is designed to empower the Canadian soldier to know what right looks like [. . . to] do the right thing, at the right time, for all of the right reasons" (Walker). In other words, people are trained to not just know the law, but also to know what is morally good and bad from an ethical standpoint.

Re-introducing conscription to Canada would provide many benefits, one of which would be to produce more upstanding citizens. Discipline improves when people are taught to respect laws and how to deal with stressful situations. They become aware of the country's laws through education and philosophical discussion, learning right from wrong. As a famous general once declared, "The Soldier is also a citizen. In fact, the highest obligation and privilege of citizenship is that of bearing arms for one's country" --General S. Patton.

456 words

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Canada Might Be a Sitting Duck if it Does Not Reintroduce Conscription

Did you know that Canada has an army? An organization called the Canadian Armed Forces is comprised of soldiers that go on missions abroad and that respond to emergencies here at home. The mandate of our country's fine Canadian armed forces is to protect Canada and its sovereignty, defend North America, and to contribute to international peace and security through operations around the world. Canada should immediately introduce a nationwide conscription call because it would increase the number of people in the army.

If we greatly increase the number of available people in our country's army, there will be that many more able-bodied people to respond to critical and severe emergencies here at home and to go abroad to make a good name for our country and make a difference in the world. More people means more effectiveness. There is an old saying that "there is strength in numbers." In other words, more able-bodied people means more assets to quickly respond to situations that require the intervention of the armed forces. Having more able-bodied people in the Canadian Armed Forces also means that there will be greater employee diversity among the enlisted ranks in our army. As Andrade notes, "with so many different and diverse minds coming together many more solutions will arise as every individual brings in their way of thinking, operating and solving problems and decision making." More diversity means greater effectiveness at contemplating things, figuring things out and formulating or selecting a final plan of action that must be carried out.

Secondly, it will produce a sense of very important national pride. If everyone must absolutely participate in the army, the majority of people will feel like they have a sense of belonging. It "instills discipline and a sense of national pride in young people" (Debating Europe). Having a country full of ambitious, proud people will be extremely good for overall morale. A nationwide conscription will also allow for our country to more easily achieve its goals, as determined by the democratic and elected government in power. President Obama is signing into power a new conscription bill and stated that "we cannot continue to rely only on our military in order to achieve the national security objectives that we have set" (Obama). In other words, a conscripted civilian force would enable these objectives to be achieved in the form of a regular national guard that would train once a month.

So, Canada should immediately conscript able-bodied Canadians into its national armed forces. It might increase the number of people in the military and that could improve things, overall. It would help us appear better in the eyes of other countries. In doing so, our country will be a better place!

454 words

* the complete document, including the "Works Cited" sections are available on the Jamie's Tips website, under the search term "argumentative essays"

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