

Vinyl 2010 Essay Competition Submission Template

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Summary:

“If there is enough food for everybody, why does hunger still exist?”

Hunger and poverty are still some of the biggest issues in the 21st century, because almost half of the world's population struggles with these problems every day. Despite the help of human development organizations hunger increases more and more and is present in almost every country in the world today. Hunger affects much of the world's population and it can only be resolved if everyone unites to fight against it.

Essay:

“If there is enough food for everybody, why does hunger still exist?”

Every day hundreds of millions of people live in hunger because they do not have access to food. World hunger is especially prevalent in Asian, African and Latin American countries. In 2008, approximately one billion people lived in hunger, which is approximately 14% of the world population; that's every seventh human being on earth. Over 8.8 million people die every year due to hunger; that's 24,000 people per day. In the 21st century, one human being dies of starvation every three seconds.

But these facts are made worse if we consider that our earth grows enough grain that every person could receive 3,500 calories each day. And yet, people still go hungry. So it is necessary to ask, if there is enough food for everybody, why does hunger still exist?

There are many reasons for world hunger in the 21st century, which each person would attach a different importance depending on his/her political position. Although wars, natural disasters, land distribution and lack of technology are important causes, especially the influence of big industrial countries in Europe and North-America allow hunger and poverty to thrive in the harshly-termed “Third World” countries. In this connection, selfishness, ignorance, greed and apathy have a great significance for the continuation of world hunger.

Today, almost half of the total world grain harvest is fed to animals in order to raise and slaughter them; this allows meat to be sold for low prices in the European and North American markets. If one were to distribute the grain harvest directly to human beings, you could support seven times more people than if it were used as animal feed. With regard to this outcome, unfortunately, “the animals of the rich eat the bread of the poor.”

If we look on our global community, we will see that 63% of the world's private consumption is in North America and Europe (North America 32%, Europe 31%), but only 15% of the world population lives in these regions. In comparison, Africa has 14% of the world population, which is almost the same as North America and Europe together, yet Africa has only 2% of the world's private consumption. This shows that there are big social disadvantages in the world.

But even if you would still feed such portions to the animals in the future, there would be enough food on the earth to sate every human being on earth every day. Thus why does hunger still exist? The author Jean Ziegler describes details in his book, "How the Hunger Comes to the World," how the big international business groups raise their prices by hoarding grain to make high speculative profits. From this point of view, it makes you think that these groups do not want to end hunger because their goal of making a profit causes hunger to persist.

If we want to successfully solve the problem of hunger, we have to work together as an international community. Industrial states have to be aware of how much food and energy they are consuming. It is necessary that they understand that their actions, even those of a single person, can affect the hunger and poverty of other countries. If we understand these circumstances, we will understand our responsibility for finding solutions to these problems.

We should not only educate people in the countries which struggle with hunger but also educate the people who help cause hunger. We all play an important part in the development in other areas of the world. We have to learn how we can support sustainability and how we can change our consumption habits. It is important to make aware that even simple things like recycling, conserving gas/energy, and purchasing fair trade items can help in the fight against hunger and poverty.

The governments of all countries are instrumental in including this knowledge in the education curriculums of the school systems. For so long now, the industrial countries have not changed their consumption and their actions will cause hunger to persist. We are responsible for future generations and by ending hunger and finding a way of an encouraging development, we can save the world.