

Vinyl 2010 Essay Competition Submission Template

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Summary:

Today's fast-moving world is crisis-stricken in food, fuel and climate change areas. Tomorrow's world is said to have nine billion people and that's where the dangerous line we stand at today will be crossed over. How do we feed the world? And by feed I mean not only food but fuel and oxygen also. Most of the possible solutions to one problem seem to have negative effect on the other one. The essay focuses on the ways to escape such vicious circles in the face of crises.

Essay:

Today's fast-moving world is crisis-stricken in food, fuel and climate change areas. Tomorrow's world is said to have nine billion people and that's where the dangerous line we stand at today will be crossed over. How do we feed the world? And by feed I mean not only food but fuel and oxygen also.

Most of the possible solutions to one problem seem to have negative effect on the other one. For example, the expansion of the agricultural areas damages nature and speeds up the global warming. Vicious circle. Can we escape it? If yes, how?

To start with, productivity feeds on investments. Therefore, the agriculture should have more support than it has today because the steadily-growing industrial sector is constantly stifling us all. Investing in agriculture is probably the most effective way of struggling against poverty. The investments should be fed to the primary means, such as seed, fertilizers and fodder, as well as to the secondary: storage rooms, reservoirs, water supply systems and country roads. Africa, for instance, has a strong potential that needs to be developed by such investments. The harvest in Africa depends on the rainfall which would be enough if the rainwater was collected and stored.

One more way to solve the food crisis is the wider cultivation and use of chemically affected or genetically modified food. The climate changes have negative effect on most of the agricultural areas; therefore, the farmers have to choose whether to use chemical fertilizers or cultivate modified cultures. However, this subject from the very beginning is extremely controversial and in many countries people refuse to buy locally but chemically grown goods or those bred in laboratories.

The vicious circle continues. The attempts to replace fossil fuel by biofuel seem to deepen the food crisis and may soon be recognized as crime against humanity because the biofuel production feeds on nutritive grain. The production of biofuel is the main reason of increased cereal prices throughout the world. World Bank announced that during the last three years the cereal prices increased by 181 %. It is clear that the people from developing countries suffer the most from the increasing food prices. Some countries,

such as India, Egypt, Argentina and Brazil started to limit the export of rice in order to decrease the national price increase.

However, fossil fuel has to be replaced by alternative energy sources and though it may seem unbelievable the chemists of Massachusetts may have found the way to perform artificial photosynthesis, hence, to solve the global energy crisis. According to nature.com, the scientists created simple and inexpensive system which may be used to analyse water into oxygen and hydrogen. Solar power could be used to perform such a task. This would benefit solar power as a potential alternative for the fossil fuel because it would be the possibility to obtain and store solar power in an easily-utilizable form. The storage of solar power is still based on the low-effectiveness batteries. And in this case, when solar power is stored as gas, it could be conveyed long distance through piping systems. This is a huge step forward in creating technologies which use solar power to produce fuel. The other positive effect is that when hydrogen is extricated from water, oxygen is inevitably produced. Of course, this needs lots of experiments and lots of investments but overall it's a good start.

While scientists keep on searching for ways to replace fossil fuel, there are ways to at least increase the use of renewable energy because a good beginning is half the battle. Wind power plants are usually undersubscribed by locals because of the noise they generate. Yet this inconvenience can be solved by building offshore wind power plants. Compared to land-based power plants, offshore wind power plants are more complicated to build but have many advantages. Offshore winds are generally stronger and often permanent; therefore, offshore wind energy generation is more efficient. Offshore power plants can be bigger than land-based ones because the transportation of huge turbines to the site poses difficulties whereas sea transportation is a lot more convenient.

To sum up, tomorrow's nine billion people can be fed if the investments are made in the areas where the famine is outspread, where people are not able to grow as much food as they need, where the resources are used insufficiently. The worrying food and energy crisis can be solved by trade, investments, support and partnership.