

Vinyl 2010 Essay Competition Submission Template

ID number: 937 *(insert your id number here)*

Summary:

(insert your summary here – maximum 100 words)

The world is not at a dead end. Starving populations may not have a clue what sustainable development is and developed countries may persist in overconsumption. The key to our problem is unity and common visions. The efforts to face the crises should be coordinated globally. Although quality minds and scientific breakthroughs can successfully contribute, education for *all* people is urgent so as they are motivated to act. Our situation is deteriorating but not irreversible, for mankind has the instinct to protect its and other species.

Essay:

(insert your summary here – maximum 1000 words)

Imagine an African mother dragging herself, scarcely bearing her skinny figure, along several kilometers under the hot sun, in order to seek food for her starving children. Feel the grievous pain, the sorrow in her heart, the overwhelming fear she will go back and find her children dead. Now picture a European businessman having lunch in his favorite cozy restaurant and lamenting the rocketing gas and food prices, his long working period without vacation and his suffering from insomnia because of stress.

Which of these scenes is really a plight? How are they related to each other? Which society and what kind of well-being are we holding this discussion on? I can't help wondering if we are struggling to save "us"- who live in a modern world in need of more and more energy but are privileged to satisfy both our needs and wishes- or "them" – the victims not only of our choices¹ but also of natural and socio-economic disasters. Natural resources crisis seems to be the common basis of food and energy crisis. Ironically, natural resources –exhaustible or not- are essential for everybody's survival and evolution on this earth. As a consequence, we are all going to be affected more or less in some time, if we do not do our utmost to maintain them through sustainable development and distribute them evenly.

From ancient Greek cities we have moved on to larger entities, the states, and nowadays we are in the first steps of an era marked by globalization, the eminent element of which is interaction between states and actors of international stage. As a matter of fact, unilateral action taken by separate governments in any fields and rampant individualism is of no help anymore. It is vital that we are bound up with common visions of the future and share joint strategies to face the social disorders as well as the environmental challenges of our times. Setting long-term goals and benefiting from mechanisms and instruments of implementation in United Nations forum or other existing global institutions could be the key to reach our global community's welfare.

In this pursuit of euphoria, we should unite. Taken for granted the vast chasm between malnourished populations and developed ones, unity will come when conflicts between interests cease and “*ius ad bellum*”ⁱⁱⁱ is lost for good, when we realize that the core of welfareⁱⁱⁱ is composed by virtue and fairness. Unity will certainly come when we^{iv} manage to have all things in moderation.^v To estimate our values and reconsider our (economic^{vi}) system, introspection and meditation is demanded a priori. Humans are creatures of compassion and solidarity after all. According to supporters of Darwin theory, it is possible for altruism to prevail against the instinct of self-preservation in favor of the survival of the ‘team’, for man is a social animal incapable of living in loneliness.

Having given humanitarian aid to people who do not have the luxury to bother with sustainable development, together we focus on promoting rural development coordinated internationally. A combination of large-scale agriculture for biofuels^{vii} and certain products like wheat with small-holders’ agriculture for domestic food production can turn out to be the ultimate initiative to fight hunger, reduce poverty, enhance food security for the vulnerable and meet increased demand in the ensuing years.^{viii} Besides, such policies are even the perfect opportunity for modern man to seize in order to slip out of urbanization back to nature where we belong and to regain psychical harmony and mental stability.

Application of effective measures in the field of agriculture is not enough though. It is crucial to invest significantly generous funds on renewable sources, like sun, air and hydrogen^{ix}. The transition from intensive use of oil into environmentally friendly technologies strikes as inevitable, however difficult it is. Governments should, inter alia, give incentives and urge entrepreneurs, especially young ones, to set new trends by assimilating ‘green’ technologies in their businesses and regulate taxes to provide ‘green’ electricity to households. Every single aspect of our everyday life should be reformed gradually. From reinforcing public transport and the use of bicycles for specific destinations to obliging the building of ‘green’ houses and factories, the list of concrete actions to be taken is endless.

The fundamental question is yet to be answered. Are all these enough? The majority of young generation in developed countries lack responsibility and awareness, thus having an apathetic attitude towards the menaces to our world. Education is and will be the number one priority so as their minds are cultivated to face any crisis with innovation and will. It is also the means for the young people in developing countries to get employed and overcome poverty and hunger. Knowledge is the weapon for the new generations to sufficiently fight against catastrophes.

Human contrivance is beyond our imagination. Under inspiring global and national democratic leadership man can achieve balance in this world by finding solutions to the hardest problems like we have done in innumerable cases in the past^x. Is it a chimera to uphold that we, as a union, can change the world? Is it utopian to believe that we, altogether, can respond to challenges of our times? Let’s rebuild the Babel, this time with better prospects...

ⁱ Developing countries abundant in resources are usually attacked by governments of modern world which desire access to their resources so as they can cover their needs

ⁱⁱ The right to wage war

ⁱⁱⁱ See http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/QUALITY_OF_LIFE.PDF

^{iv} Mostly referring to modern world in developed countries tending in exaggeration and overconsumption

^v Aristotle's theories seem to be as timely as ever, read especially '*Nicomachean Ethics*'

^{vi} Capitalism mainly

^{vii} See '*The state of food and agriculture, Biofuels: prospects, risks and opportunities*' by FAO

^{viii} See the *twin-track* approach presented by FAO in "*The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2008*". See also <http://web.worldbank.org/>

^{ix} See <http://www.renewableenergyworld.com/rea/magazine>

^x Disasters and diseases, like floods, malaria, cancer etc, which were thought to be impossible to face or incurable. Or when the bell rang for limited coal and man began to use oil