Dear English Faculty,

In each of my essays you will notice my strong point is the amount of detail provided in each one. However, the paragraphs of my essays do lack growth and explanation in some areas. I think I could be a good writer if I just apply the time that is needed to improve more. I enjoy free writing because; it allows me to express things that may be on my mind. English is in fact my favorite subject to learn about. I’ve always received A’s and B’s in every English class I’ve had; English is a subject that interests me a lot.

(Long Essay) For my long essay I chose to write about media violence and how it doesn’t always cause a negative effect on children. The biggest strength in the essay is my amount of details and examples. My weakness was the length of some of my paragraphs. I re-read the essay and revised by adding more explanation to claims that I made. I think this long essay is probably my strongest essay; I wrote the essay and revised and re-wrote it many times because I wanted to show my improvement. I also believe this is stronger than the others because I took more time to prepare it.

(Short Essay) The next essay I wrote was on childhood obesity and the effects it can cause a child. The strength of this essay was also the types of examples I provided. I also explored it from more than one point of view. The weaknesses of my essay were grammatical errors and forgetting to write in a formal style. I revised the essay and changed the format I was writing in. I would have to say the most difficult thing about revising my essays is applying the correction providing by my instructor as well as things I see need to be changed.

(In class essay) My in class essay talks about teens entering the workforce I discuss the reasons I think teens should be able to work and still attend school and; also provide examples of ways teens can work and attend school successfully. The weakness of this essay is the short length of the paragraphs and not taking enough time to proof-read. The strength of the essay was my ideas for teens entering the workforce. This essay has potential to be better, if I had more time to write I think it could be a lot better.

Now that this course is over I will take all of what I’ve learned and apply it to my next semester’s courses. I’m grateful for everything that I have been taught in English 101-XX. I’m going to allow myself more time to proof-read and jot down ideas before sitting down to type. I will use my new tools of knowledge to help me to become a better writer.

Sincerely,

XXXXXX
Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity shouldn’t be blamed on toys. Children get excited over toys and shiny things but; they also get hungry and want food. Children may focus on the exciting advertisements, such as the different cereal commercials, but the parent has the responsibility to say yes or no to the child. We must examine why a child is overweight, look at the parents lifestyle and also the genetic family history. Some may disagree with me by saying, children should be able to eat what they want or that if children don’t like vegetables they shouldn’t be made to eat them. I would have to point out that they are just kids; they don’t get a say in what they eat or even what they do.

Claire McCarthy, MD a primary care physician and the medical director of Children’s Hospital Boston says Happy Meal toys are not the real issue of obesity. She goes on to say she likes the Happy Meals just the way they are and that nobody is forcing anyone to go to McDonald’s. I’ve never heard of anyone being forced to go to McDonald’s to eat let alone any other fast food restaurants. McCarthy feels “that people who want the toys taken out of high-calorie fast food are missing the point. Let’s start looking at ourselves and stop blaming it on the toys or using the excuse my child wanted so I had to get it for them. Parents have to step up and take that responsibility.

On the other hand, some may say there’s no real issue with fast foods and kids meal toys. There are some parents who don’t see their child’s health at risk then they’re feeding them greasy fast foods night after night instead of home cooked meals. When their child can’t nut a long distance without huffing and puffing or gasping for air then become aware of what’s already been right in front of them. I hope parents will see the seriousness of obesity and the health and well being that can affect a child’s life.

Childhood obesity has become a major issue in the world today. Many families in America are constantly being affected by obesity whether it be a child or an adult who is overweight. This issue can decrease
greatly if we would become more aware of our health and put more value into their lives. In fact, I know first hand how many people get to the point of being overweight. Members of my family weren’t very health conscious. They ate whatever they liked until they began to develop health issues, and now they are more aware of their food intake and life style. They always tell me stories about when they were my age I use all their advice and I hope that other parents will provide their Children with examples to help them make better decisions.

Typically when someone comes from a family that is large framed genetically you will may be. Mayo Clinic.com says, Ethnicity can play a role in obesity in children. “A lack of proper diet regularly eating high-calorie foods, such as fast foods, baked goods and vending machine snacks, can easily cause your child to gain weight Loading up on soft drinks, candy and desserts also can cause weight gain. Foods and beverages like these are high in sugar, fat and calories. Children who don’t exercise much are more likely to gain weight because. They don’t bum calories through physical activity. Inactive leisure activities, such as watching television or playing video games, contribute to the problem”.

Mayo Clinic also says “there may also be psychological factors that can range from one reaction to another, some children overeat to cope with problems or to deal with emotions, some eat when stressed, and some to fight boredom. Their parents may have similar tendencies”. Some children may look overweight because their big boned but they may not be overweight. If your child may be becoming overweight you can take them to your primary care provider and have your child examined. The doctor will measure the child’s body mass and weight to determine if the child is overweight or just built a little heavier than others.

Of course, exercise can help but also healthy eating habits can help. Sometimes you can make a difference in your child’s life just by encouraging them to join a curricular activity. Just a little more effort on a parents’ part can go a long way. Don’t always go with the quickest way to do things; make the time to prepare a meal for the family from time to time. A family’s health history or ethnicity doesn’t
have to determine your child’s life will be. Also if a parents instill good values in a child’s life they can help to steer them in the right direction of making good decisions on their own later in life.

“Childhood Obesity.” Mayoclinic.com
Teens should be able to work after school jobs! I myself worked while in high school and turned out fine. If a teen learns how to manage their time well, they shouldn’t have many problems with juggling school and work.

Teens will face problems however, if their putting more time toward working than completing homework or studying. A teen’s parent should observe if their child is beginning to struggle with school due to working and if so they should let the teen know school is their main priority. Parents should make sure their child doesn’t feel obligated to keep their job even if it’s causing issues in school.

When I was in high school I worked at a fast food restaurant; it wasn’t something I had to do but it helped me to pay luxuries that I wanted. My mom also told me that if my grades began to slip that she would have me quit or cut back on my hours. Which one day she did notice they were beginning to do just that so she said she wanted me to ask my boss to cut my hours down a little; I did and even though it made my check smaller I appreciated it in the long run. I feel that if a teen can work and go to school with a given set of rules by their parent they should be fine. Others may say teens might need to work to help pay household bills but, I would still have to point out that a parent should still be more focused on their child’s education.

Parents need to make sure the teen is going into the working world for the right reasons, not to buy a car. Teens have to be reminded they are still kids sometimes because if you force them to grow up too early they tend to miss life lessons. Peter J. Larkin, the Massachusetts state representative says, “We have sixteen and seventeen year olds working forty hours a week on top of thirty in the classroom, he says something has to give; and academics seems to be taking the back seat’. This is when we need parents and representatives to step in and say, “Hey this is too much!” teens also need to realize when their feeling tired on a constant basis; that maybe I am doing too much just need to relax and be a kid
for a little while longer. When teens begin entering the work force they don’t realize is that once I start this I will be working for most of my life now.

Once teens get more of an understanding of why their working or what their working toward it can help them to decide is this really a good reason to be working. “It’s probably safe for kids to work ten hours or less each week when they’re in school, but probably not such a good idea for them to work more than twenty hours,” said a professor of psychology at Temple University. I totally agree with him, you will run into problems when work is overpowering school. There are many pros and cons to allowing teens to work while in school. Teens who work can buy whatever luxury their parent won’t for instance, a video game or cd. The down sides to teens working may be that they are so busy working to earn the money for the games they forget what’s most important and don’t do their homework. Overall, I would have to say it isn’t a bad idea to allow teens to hold jobs as long as they can successfully manage their time and grades.
Media Violence and Children

Media violence can play a role in building a child’s character. Being exposed to violence doesn’t always have to cause a negative effect. Some say that media’ violence can’t be good for a child, but I would have to explain that the greatest stories involve villain and hero action. Children use stories such as Batman or Superman to overcome feats and just have fun with one another.

When a child is never exposed to violence or even exposed to kindness he or she won’t know how to react when it is presents to them. For instance, if a child has always been treated badly then exposed to kindness he or she would have a hard time adjusting to a new treatment they’ve never experienced. Media violence can motivate a child to try new obstacles. Some kids need different role models to help them to take on lift changes. If you shelter a child from violence or just from experiencing life lessons they won’t be prepared for the real world when their on there own.

Gerard Jones talks about how the “hulk” gave him the courage to try new obstacles and helped him to become brave. By being empowered by these various characters he went on to create stories to help someone else who may have been just like him. Media can also show a child how to distinguish fantasy from reality. Some children who are the only child in the home use different media characters as a means of helping with boredom.

We shouldn’t automatically point our finger at one cause for teen violence but instead, look at many factors as to why. There are many factors that should be looked at first before a judgment is made. Maggie Cutler’s article says, “It has been hard for media violence studies to shake the ambiguity of correlations. Several studies have shown that violent boys tend to watch more violence on television than others and, choose more violent content and get more enjoyment out of it”. The study also shows that there was no certainty that one action caused another. Who are we to say what’s a normal thought or behavior?
Some may say watching media violence is bad for kids but I would have to say there are benefits to being exposed to media violence. According to James Garbarino, author of Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them, he says “it makes no sense to talk about violent media as a direct cause of youth violence. Rather, he says, “it depends” (Cutler). Media violence is a risk factor that working in concert with others, can exacerbate bad behavior”. Renowned comic-book author Gerard Jones argues that “bloody videogames, gun glorifying gangsta rap and other forms of ‘creative violence’ help far more children than they hurt by giving kids a tool to master their rage”. Jones, believes all these forms of violence or action help children. I think that by providing different ways to release inner thoughts and aggression help kids to do positive actions. When children have no way of releasing things, they hold it in and that can cause them to act out in violent ways.

Before you try to pinpoint one main cause of why there’s much violence today you must look at a child’s life style, parents, and other background information. We need to fully understand a issue if there really is one before doing anything else. Cutler says, “the rule of the real says that however strong media influences may be, real life is stronger”. I totally agree, children and teens may learn some things from what they see on television but they also know what’s real and what’s appropriate to reenact as well. When a child has the concept of what’s fantasy and reality they know the difference between watching a reenactment of a killing on TV an actual killing happening in front of them.

Those who feel media violence is in no way good for kids, try opening community centers in every city. Provide new games and activities for every child. When a child has learned how to determine what’s fantasy and what’s reality their not as likely to be influenced by media. Melanie Moore, Ph. a, a psychologist who works with urban teens says “children need violent entertainment in order to explore the inescapable feelings that they’ve been taught to deny, and to resilient selfhood”. (Jones) “For the past three years Moore has been studying the ways in which children use violent stories to meet their emotional and developmental needs and the ways in which adults can help them use those stories
healthily. With her daughters help she developed Power Play, a program for helping young people improve their self knowledge and sense of potency through heroic, combative storytelling.” This is a very positive program that can help people to use these forms of media in great ways (Melanie Moore. Ph.D., psychologist).

All children feel rage at some point in their lives just like any other emotion but, the difference between some children is knowing how to channel your emotions. Jones says, “Even the sweetest and most civilized of kids experience rage. The world is uncontrollable and incomprehensible; mastering it is a terrifying, enraging task. Rage can be an energizing emotion, a shot of courage to push us to resist greater threats, take more control, than we ever thought we could. But rage is also the emotion our culture distrusts the most” (Jones). Change the focus from being afraid of what children could turn into and focus on helping them to cope with their emotions.

I won’t say violent media can not harm a child or cause a negative effect because it is possible depending on a child’s upbringing and life style. Jones thinks it has helped inspire some people to real life violence. “I am going to argue that it’s helped hundreds of people for every one its hurt, and that it can help far more if we earn to use it well. He says we act as though our highest priority is to prevent our children from growing up into murderous thugs-but modern kids are far more likely to grow up too passive, too distrustful of themselves, too easily manipulated” (Jones). Instead of trying to shelter or protect a child from all the world’s danger, let them experience life. Experiencing things for yourself is the best way to learn.

As I have stated, media violence is good for a child it can help them to overcome fears and try a new obstacle. I feel you must let a child experience things in order to know how to deal with different kinds of situations by themselves. Cartoons, movies, action figures, videogames, and many other forms of creative media help young youth cope with boredom and also deal with personal issues in positive ways.
