

English 12: Composition

Scale: 3

Comment:

This response was awarded a 3 because, although there is a focus, the ideas are simplistic, and the language is very casual and colloquial.

Positive connections with older generations can enrich our lives. Even though you may think otherwise, it is true.

Some younger generations may say that older generations are 'stupid' or 'un cool'. But I say otherwise. For lack of better terms, old people can tell us things our parents can't. They were there during the war. They saw the first T.V.'s. A few of them remember the first cars, and who could forget sliced bread. These older generations can teach us from their past life experiences, thus enriching our lives.

I once had a friend who was kicked out of his parents home. He tried staying with friends whose parents would let him stay. After about a week he decided to go to his grandma's house. His grandma is really cool. She would sit there and joke with us. She would make us brownies and cook us dinner. His grandma talked some sense into him and got him to clean up his act. She got him to do what was best and move back to his parents house.

To conclude, older generations can help us learn valuable lessons. They are not just some 'old fart', but however, only enrich our lives if we approach them with a positive attitude.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 3

Comment:

This response was awarded a 3. It does maintain a focus on the topic but the ideas are simplistic and the errors are distracting.

With positive connections with older generation can enrich our lives in many way, we can learn from their experiences.

With older generations like our grandparents we can learn about our families past, how our parents used to act at our age, how the world used to be, how the world has changed since their time as a young person. Older generations I think can tell the best stories because of their experiences in life, and the practice they have had.

Older generations have a lot to offer still, they are not all used up because of their age, they still have lots to offer us. They can show us from their mistakes from the past, so we will not do, and can learn from them. They are one of the funnest age groups there so out of the loop its funny, when you see them try to sue the "in language" you just have to laugh because they sound so akward doing it. Even when they tell their old corny jokes. They are not really funny, but they laugh so hard after they tell them they just make you burst out laughing.

When you have no one to talk to, there always their waiting for you. They always try to fix our problem, they care for us very much. They will always have time to listen to you, to go hang out with you. If you do not have a connection with your parents, you usually do with the grandparents, they treat you like on of theirs.

Just because older generations may be slow and crippled doesn't mean they don't have any uses. They're people just like us with needs and wants. We can learn from their life experiences, and learn from them, they can teach us to be better people inside. They enrich our lives every day, with the little tings they do for us each and everyday. They cannot be forgotten, they have made an impact in us all.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 4

Comment:

This response was awarded a 4. The student utilizes a formulaic model and other content is appropriate, but not engaging.

Positive connections with older generations allows people to enrich their lives in ways nothing else can. Positive connections can allow people to avoid certain hardships as well as make better decisions. Elderly people can offer advice and insight that is more useful than that found anywhere else.

Firstly, Talking to someone of an older generation will quickly reveal some excellent advice that can be very easily applied to your own life. Only a person who has experienced hardships first hand will be able to offer the kind of advice which may one day save you from bankruptcy or save you from making a terrible mistake which may cost you your life. A wise man once told me, "Don't marry until you have enough money and a house to live in." Those are words which rang true and may one day save me from a world of trouble. Only a person with experience can offer this kind of advice.

Secondly, Listening to the stories of past accomplishments of elderly people can trigger you to strive to be the best you can be. My grandfather was an immigrant from Denmark. He moved to Canada in his early twenties and started a business. He soon got married and had a family and in my opinion had made it. I strive to one day accomplish such feats in my own life. Elderly generations can offer some of the greatest inspiration in our lives.

In conclusion, There is great wisdom behind that weathered and wrinkled face. It is just waiting to be tapped into and this can only be accomplished through positive connections. So make sure to speak with the older generations and let them offer you advice and stories of the past. It will better your life or maybe even one day save your life.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 4

Comment:

This response was awarded a 4. The student employs a narrative approach, but the content lacks sophistication and development

It was a long walk up the hill to where my Great Grandmother had just moved. I was reluctant walking up that hill because I wasn't sure as to whether I would like what I saw when I got to the top of it. Eventually I got to the top where the gates to Providence Home was. This was not my Great Grandmother's house I grew up in, this was a care home for the elderly. Don't get me wrong, it was a well-respected care home, I wouldn't let my grandmother live in a shabby old age home. Although it was nice it wasn't my Big Nonna's house.

I walked into the premises to find the woman that I wished to even be half of one day. The receptionist led me to the room where she was watching 'The Price is Right.' There sat my Great Grandmother with a look of confusion on her face. It had gotten worse, the Alzheimers. I was looking into the deep blue eyes of my Grandmother but she was looking into the eyes of a stranger.

Words weren't exchanged because my Grandmother no longer spoke thanks to the alzheimers. So I did what I did everytime I came to see my Big Nonna, I read to her. Sometimes I read the paper, sometimes stories from Chicken Soup, and other times just from magazines. It was the least I could do for the woman who had a big part in raising me. I read and my Grandmother listened. Even though I never got any feedback, I knew she was listening.

Every week before and after that day I donated those two hours to my Big Nonna. No matter how boring and painful it was to sit there, no matter how many times I read the same stories, I wouldn't give it up for the world. I know my not only my Grandmother, but I will always remember the memories that I made with her.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 4

Comment:

This response was awarded a 4. The student shows a clear sense of purpose, but is not engaging.

Our elders can contribute to the success that we have in the future of our lives. Our connections with older generations can determine our lives because we lack what they have, and that is experience. Positive connections with older generations can enrich our lives because they are able to fill us in with the knowledge that we lack. Sometimes, without this knowledge from our elders, we may never go as far as we would like because we do not have that extra knowledge of their experiences earlier in life.

Our connections with our elders or superiors can really enrich our lives. Positive connections with our elders allows us to be enriched with their past and that past is their experience which can really help us succeed in life. For example, when I worked at a retail store, I was the new employee. I knew that everybody else had worked here longer than I have. Everyday, I would go through my routine, and sell glasses and clean up when the store had no customers. One day, there was this customer who was really difficult, she took me around in circles and in the end did not buy anything. During my break, my co-worker who had worked in the retail store for nearly ten years asked me how my day was going. I told him about the customer and he filled me in on tips in how to tell whether the customer was going to purchase items or not through their actions and conversation. That piece of information was vital for me and from then on, my job became much easier. My co-worker and I still work together and we have a good relationship. He fills me in on his experiences during his years of work and I gain a lot from his past. His experiences make my work so much easier.

On the other hand, negative or no connection with our elders can take our success only so far. For example if in a big company, one does not get along with his or her colleagues, it may end up in disaster. This is because one can only go so far with their knowledge in school. The rest is up to connections and experiences. Experience from our elders can take us a lot further than knowledge from school. Lack of experience will lead to disaster or less success. Disaster may come because sometimes, plans that we believe may go through sometimes is the plan his or her boss despises, and with experience from our elders, we are able to prevent from getting on the wrong side of our employer. Negative or no connections with our elders will never take anyone far in life.

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English 12: Composition

Scale: 5

Comment:

This response was awarded a 5. The student displays good control of language. The use of personal example is relevant and thoughtful.

The most important thing in my life is my family. My family is my solid rock of support, my greatest influence and my greatest conflict. Each person in my mighty oak of a family tree has helped shape who I am through my own experiences with them, experiences they have relayed to me, and wisdom they pass on. My positive connections with these older generations have greatly enriched my life.

My mother and my grandmother are two very headstrong women that have had a huge impact on me. My grandmother taught me the value of being a lady and how important it is for me to keep it that way. My mother has taught me how to be insightful and ambitious, and to challenge every statement and idea ever said. It is unimaginable for me to even contemplate what my life would be like without them.

My grandmother was a working woman in a time that this was considered to be preposterous. She taught me that a woman is her own person: never let anyone else control you. My grandmother had this theory that she liked to call "mad money". Whenever my grandfather made her angry, she would take the sum of money, unbeknownst to him she had been saving, and go away for the night or however long she felt necessary. To this day she still goes by the same policy.

My mother is a defender of the weak. She feels the need to provide for everybody and help wherever she is able. This was very beneficial to me and my brother while we were growing up. Perhaps through genetics or through experience I have inherited this trait, but because of her I too feel this need. My mother helped me create my own mission statement: Defend the dignity of every man, and to go sleep every night with a clear conscience. Two attributes that I value.

Not only have the older generations of my family taught me the "how-to's" of life, but they have also taught me the value of tradition and morals. I accredit my high standards to these people, as well as what I hold dear to my heart. I would not value what I value had it not been for their influence. Part of the reason my family is so important is because my mother has taught me that they are important. She has always told me that "blood is thicker than water".

I feel that the positive connections that I have had with people such as my mother and my grandmother have enriched my life. I have been engulfed in love and wisdom and I will never forget or regret these relationships. It is because of my history that I can have a future.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 5

Comment:

This response was awarded a 5. The student shows a controlled use of vocabulary and establishes a clear sense of voice.

What is the benefit of having grandparents? Those frail, antique individuals seem fragile, and even mysterious at times. Their long, menacing canes, and glittering mouth pieces watch our every move. But before we escape the panic, we might want to discover the shocking truth.

Grandparents are soft, loving creatures inside their wrinkly shell live wise souls and cheerful spirits. Believe it or not, our predecessors have far more understanding than we do. Years of challenges, hardships and obstacles have sharpened their minds to a crystalline quality. Their knowledge surpasses even the large brains of our parents. When we are in a sticky situation, it is always a wise idea to travel back in time a ways. Grandparents, when needed, can provide more useful advice than the “magical” internet of our era. Although our grandparents may experience inconvenient glitches and viruses we can always rely on their never ending love, and source of information.

Inside each of our grandparents, there is a lively spirit. Behind Grandpa’s thick reading glasses, there are twinkling, smiling, eyes and behind Grandma’s knitted apron, there is a pocket full of candy. Although it may seem hard to believe, Grandpa and Grandma are teenagers at heart. For as long as they live, they will never cease to sing in the bath or dance in the rain. Along with their furry miniature critters, our dear grandparents enrich our lives and provide us with comfort.

Has the truth sunk in? The wise, playful phenomenas we are lucky to call grandparents benefit us in many ways. They connect us to the past, strengthen us in the present, and contribute to a brighter future. Grandparents are unpolished gems, waiting to be discovered by a privileged miner. They are twinkling starts of magic and warm sun rays of love. Without these priceless creatures of the older generations, our fragile world would break apart.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 5

Comment:

This succinct response was awarded a 5. The student utilizes a creative approach and maintains reader engagement through imagery.

As the sun was rising, a faint rustling could be heard. The mother bear poked her head out of a bush, and after a moment of looking about her, she emerged, reassured that it was safe. Immediately behind her was a cub, zigzagging to each of his mothers pawprints. The pair walked silently, towards an ever increasing rumble of a stream.

Standing very still, her jaws open, the mother waited patiently for a fish to jump in her direction. Sitting on the bank quietly observing his mother's every move and committing it to memory, was the cub. An unsuspecting salmon leaped forth from the water only to be swatted by a giant paw. The fish wriggled helplessly as its flight was unwontedly prolonged. The cub, still, silently waiting charged upon the gift his mother gave him.

The day worn on, and another night passed. The days became hot, then cool, as the leaves started to fall, floating this way and that, until they came to rest on the ground. The grey gloomy frost then became white and slept. Slept until once again it became warm, and green. A faint rustling could be heard.

The bear emerged from the bush, alone, and poked through the forest, towards the familiar stream. Reaching the banks of the river, the bear stopped, and looked, as a plump young bear confidently strode towards the forest, a fish wriggling in his mouth. The corners of the mother bear's mouth curled, as if to smile, as she proudly watched her cub disappear into the forest.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 6

Comment:

This response was awarded a 6 because it is an imaginative thoughtful response to the topic. It exhibits an effective writing style and clearly engages the reader.

In a bitter fight in cold November, Paul left home. His mother closed the door behind him. His father didn't know that he left until the weekend, when a neighbour finally called to let him know. He hadn't seen his son in three years anyway. So, sixteen years old and with nothing but a suitcase and three hundred dollars, Paul caught a train to Boston, because he knew that New York was too far.

Paul got a job as a dishwasher, then as a waiter, then as a host, and finally, through a combination of luck, sharp with and good timing, Paul became the manager. That took eighteen years. Paul turned thirty-four in the company of his fiancé and several good friends that he made. His mother saw the date on the calendar, but she didn't send a card. Even if she had bought one, she wouldn't have known where to send it.

As a treat to himself and his fiancé, Paul bought two tickets to London that summer. It would be his first time off the continent, indeed his first trip of notable distance since he caught the train to Boston. The trip was a wonderful experience for Paul, but he didn't feel entirely right. Paul had stability, love, money, friends, but it was in London that he found the missing piece of himself.

He went alone to an enormous museum in the city (his fiancé preferred to shop that day). He was impressed by the paintings, and mystified by the sculptures. He happened upon one particularly intriguing exhibit in the Historical Anthropology section. The fossilized remains of a mother, father, and child, embedded deep into the Earth lay in front of him. Crushed by a great earthquake in modern-day Turkey, the family perished in tight embrace and remained in that position forever. The sign told Paul that the family was now eight hundred years old, three of thousands of victims of the murderous tremor. Their bones intermingled in a desperate grasp, Paul was struck by the epitome of love, and he realized the missing component of his soul.

Back in Boston, for the first time in eighteen years, Paul called home.

"It's Paul."

"Paul. Paul where are you?"

"In Boston. I'm getting married in November. I mailed you an invitation."

"Oh Paul, of course I'll be there..."

Paul's father died eight years earlier, and he never really mended the relationship with his mother, but Paul knew that he found a piece of himself that he would never lose again.

On a cold night in sweet November, Paul got married.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 6

Comment:

This response was awarded a 6 because of its maturity of style. The reader is engaged by its strong voice; furthermore, the ending is subtle, yet powerful.

The gruff voice, the vanilla flavoured cigar smoke, the laugh always resulting in a hacking cough, these were the distinct memories of my grandfather. Perhaps what best described him was the vanilla flavour, plain and simple, exactly how he lived his life and interacted with everyone. I guess being born during a time of war will harden anyone's emotions but was a joke, a giggle or a smile really that hard to ask for? And this was all before the cancer hit, attaching itself to his left like a lion to its prey. No matter how strong and sturdy he may have ached this was not a battle he was going to win via a stern look or raising of his voice.

No matter how well I did in school or how many sports teams I captained he never once acknowledged my accomplishments. The one true thing in which he showed compassion for was football.

"There's nothing like giving up your heart and soul on every play and then to get right back up and it again" he told me once.

This was perhaps the sole reason why I tried out my junior year, making the team and eventually winning Most Valuable Player honours. Once again I received little recognition from him. The severity of the cancer grew by the day, and already virulent cough turned into a gut wrenching ordeal lasting minutes on end. I developed a deep sense of pity towards him although showing anything of the sort to his face was met with a swift "whatcha looking at kid."

As his days dwindled down my visits to the hospital increased, many times not even seeing him, merely to help my grandmother cope or drive other family members. His body mass dwindled as well, strong sturdy muscles giving way to useless fat and eventually skin and bones. He was now but a fragment of himself.

Football, the one thing we shared, the one bond we had, was nearing the completion of its season. Thus the Super Bowl was upon us, an event my grandfather hadn't missed in his lifetime. However this one, the nurses told him, was one he would have to miss. The dingy hospital of our small town did not provide the simple convenience of working lights let alone a television restricting any hope of him watching the game.

This, I knew, was the last straw for my grandfather and he dwelled into deep depression knowing his end was soon. I also knew I couldn't let this happen and immediately brought my laptop to his room the day of the big game and set up it up so he could watch his beloved sport one last time. There was no thank you or even a nod throughout the game until the last seconds ticked away on the game clock. As I looked over to my dying grandfather I saw a man

overcome with emotions. A small tear running down his face he croaked "I'm so proud of you." And that's all I ever needed.

English 12: Composition

Scale: 6

Comment:

This response was awarded a 6 because of its superiority. It demonstrates maturity of style and sophisticated language. This is clearly a high 6.

The fabric of an old shirt against my palm felt as soft and wrinkly as my father's face when he hit me. He looked at me, and I left. I walked across town, the soles of my feet bare and tough in the loose sand and warm cement.

I went to see a lady whose home was heavy with the powdery smell of old age and quiet nights. I had hated this smell when my ratty prison of a high school sentenced all seniors to thirty hours of community service. Now it was my refuge.

She was standing on the back porch, numbly buttering the freshly laundered shirts of a husband who did not recognize her. Her hands were maps of veins and age spots; roads I have not yet travelled. Stories I have not yet heard. She stopped when she saw me, scalp tensing as she studied the cracks in my skin from the salt of my tears. We didn't say much.

I helped her fold the laundry, and separate wooden clothespins from plastic ones. The air buzzed slightly with the slight scent of soapy anticipation and freshly mown grass. The blue basket contained light spring blankets, almost identical to the ones in which I had during childhood, enveloping myself in a cocoon of lavender scent.

We went inside the home for a drink. The lemonade was too sour, and the ice burned my lips. She looked at me from across the table, with eyes like cloudy oysters with pearls of wisdom. An old Johnny Cash song was playing, but I could tell where it was from.

"Four strong words that blow lonely, even seas that run high, all those things that don't change, come what may..."

The music swirled like socks in a dryer. An engine started somewhere in the distance.

I could see myself in those eyes. My hands will someday become those hands. All the ecstasies and pains I have experienced will be etched in the lines of my face in the form of cryptic codes for teenagers to decipher. My palms were hot and I wanted to laugh or throw up.

"But the good times are all gone, and I'm bound for wrong on..."

We were just doing laundry, after all.