

English B50 SLO/Best Practices Palooza

Essay pack

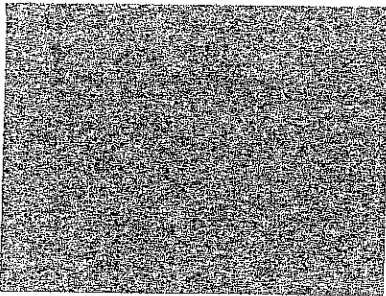
Meeting:

Date: Friday, Sept. 11th

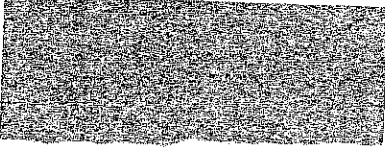
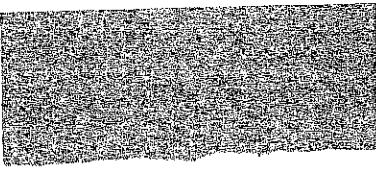
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Time: 12:30PM—Until the cows return to their domiciles....

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English 53

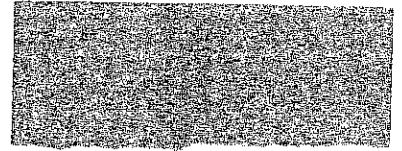


5/13/15

Proper Educational Tools for the Underprivileged

Proper educational opportunities for the underprivileged are a prevalent problem in today's American society. To illustrate, underprivileged people generally grow up in troubled households and have inadequate financial stability and aid. However, pursuing education is fundamental towards becoming productive well-adjusted adults. Due to these drawbacks, society needs to implement better techniques in assuring the underprivileged have the same opportunities as the privileged. *The Other Wes Moore* and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* illustrate on the universal issue of growing up in an impoverished underprivileged environment. In *The Other Wes Moore*, author Wes Moore, an underprivileged, fatherless, African American, shows us through his perspective, how he was able to refrain from the lure of effortless money through drug trafficking. Nevertheless, Wes Moore instilled the value of education through military school. Similarly, in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, author Sherman Alexie shows us through the main character, Junior, experiences of an underprivileged teenager growing up on a reservation. Junior endures trials of physical torment and psychological ridicule throughout his life due to his birth defect (too much cerebral spinal fluid) and physical appearance. Nonetheless, through role models, but most importantly through education, Junior

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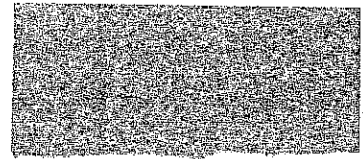


was able to prosper and develop into a young productive well-adjusted adult. Despite the multiple contributing factors, the underprivileged need to cultivate the importance of education in order to develop healthy productive mindsets and aspire to something greater in life.

The book *The Other Wes Moore* and the novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* provide excellent examples of how education and determination results in success. In order to succeed, the underprivileged must grasp the importance of having a healthy, determined, and devoted mindset. Furthermore, it's vital for these individuals to have positive role models, support, and reinforcement. Despite the variety of positive impacts, education would prove to be most influential for underprivileged groups. Additionally, it's also important for the individual to have a general dream or goal; in contrast, it's also essential that the individual has a realistic goal. In the book *The Other Wes Moore*, the other Wes Moore had unrealistic goals; his aspirations consisted of becoming a "professional football player or a rapper" (Moore 58). Moore's irrational thinking would lead to drug trafficking as a temporary job, while he pursues his goals. In contrast, Moore could've had substituted drug trafficking with education, and that would've been proven to be practical involving his aspirations. In addition, Moore could have gone to college and attempted to obtain scholarships through football. Nonetheless, underprivileged groups need to take the initiative in developing positive healthy work ethic in order to succeed in today's American society.

In the book *The Other Wes Moore*, Moore provides examples on how essential financial stability and aid is when pursuing education. In today's society, and increasing more, and more each year, tuition is at an all-time high. For instance, the author Wes Moore provides insight on

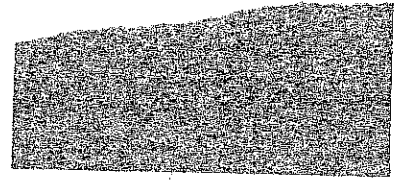
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the other Wes Moore's mother Mary and her financial situation. Her Pell Grant (federal aided funding) was cancelled due to educational cutbacks in 1982, implemented by the Regan administration: "During his eight years, in office, Ronald Reagan reduced the education budget by half" (Moore 17). In this passage we learn that Mary is met with an ultimatum, she must drop out of school, and give up on her dreams, while attempting to better her children's lives. In comparison, the books *The Other Wes Moore* and *The True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* show us how both parents urged and found a way, by any means necessary, to send their children to private school. In general, private schools tend to cost more, due to high tuition fees. Additionally, private schools are further from public schools, usually around middle-upper class areas. As a result, the underprivileged are forced to take difficult alternative measures in order to attend private school. In this story we learn the trials and tribulations; author Wes Moore had to endure in order to succeed in life. Unfortunately, the other Wes Moore wasn't able to succeed due to his inadequate education, poor choices, and lack of proper motivation.

In the book *The Other Wes Moore*, the author Wes Moore demonstrates the tremendous benefits of benefits and scholarships. If the underprivileged are going to progress in society, then they must take the initiative in acquiring internships and scholarships. Internships allow students to gain experience in their field of interest as student's work towards their degree. In addition, internships allow students to meet and make connections pertaining to their field. In contrast, scholarships provide financial support, which is rewarded from maintaining a high grade point average. Wes Moore is sent to Valley Forge, a military academy in Pennsylvania, by his mother Mary. At first, Wes resented the idea of military school, he was afraid and tried escaping, but failed. Eventually, Moore embraced military school, and matured and developed a positive

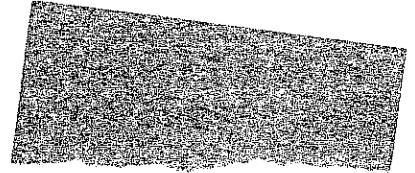
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mindset. He was encouraged by his Valley Forge counselor to have a sit-down with Paul White, the assistant director of admissions at John Hopkins University (Moore 160). After his dinner, he would go on to apply for Hopkins, and was not only accepted, but received scholarship funding as well. Furthermore, Wes Moore would serve an internship for the Major of Baltimore, Major Schmoke. Schmoke would inform and instill the importance of obtaining the Rhodes Scholarship award. Moore will go on to accept the scholarship and be the first in thirteen years to have received one, as well as be the first African American to obtain the award. Clearly, taking advantage of proper educational opportunities, with the encouragement and support of role models, would prove to be prosperous for underprivileged groups.

Similarly, Sherman Alexie provides excellent examples how education helped shaped an underprivileged teenager's life. In the book *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* we are introduced Junior who lives in a troubled household. His mother never achieved her dream in becoming a teacher, while his father is a second rate musician, and an alcoholic, in addition his sister being a depressed isolated alcoholic. Junior meets another boy at Reardan, who not only instills the importance of reading, but also significance of obtaining a quality education and the value of hard work. Despite Gordy serving as a role model, he provided Junior with the proper educational tools in order to succeed in life. When given the opportunity, the underprivileged must take the initiative, and develop a high standard of determination, devotion, and effective study skills. Just how education provides people in general, a foundation, we're shown in *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* how education provides Junior with a stable ground to pave his way towards his goals.

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The Other Wes Moore and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* are ideal illustrations of how vital and necessary education is for our underprivileged society. However, despite education serving as the essential contributing factor, there are many different aspects that stem and contribute towards education: role models, environment, and financial stability, and aid. Gordy played an essential role model that led to Junior's success. In contrast, Mayor Schmoke served as an imperative role model as well, that led to Wes Moore's notable, "Rhodes Scholarship." However, we're taught how crucial it is to have financial stability when pursuing education. Mary was forced to give up on all of her future aspirations once she found out her Pell Grant had been terminated. In conclusion, education provides people with a foundation, the underprivileged especially need this support. In addition to having this foundation, the underprivileged also need to develop a positive mindset, take advantage of educational opportunities and resources. Overall, these are the steps needed to take, in order to succeed and become productive well-adjusted adult.

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2 May 2015

WC: 865

True Happiness

Some say happiness can be determined through what we physically possess and others beg to differ. On the other hand, there's a side of people who believe that the best possessions in life are free like seeing a friend or family member. In the text *The Soloist*, the author Steve Lopez who is also a columnist for *The Los Angeles Times*, explains his encounter with musician, schizophrenic, and homeless man, Nathaniel Ayers. Through their journey, Lopez and Ayers became great friends. During most of the text, Lopez attempted to help out Ayers countless times. Over and over again, Ayers would reject the assistance he was offered. Lopez would sit and wonder if Ayers was truly happy. Steve Lopez has many situations going on in his life. As a columnist, Husband, Father, and now friend to Nathaniel Ayers, Lopez's life is very complex. To make things worse, he makes everything a priority which just adds more stress to his hectic life. Although he was homeless, Ayers seemed to be a very happy fellow. The two men are both very happy and live gracious lives, but when it comes down to it, Nathaniel Ayers is happier than Steve Lopez because Ayers has no worries and he has all he wants. Ayers' simple life sounds much easier than Lopez's.

The life of a homeless man usually consists of a need for nutrition, shelter, and money. The homeless live day to day struggling with the horrible situations life throws at them like the

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uncomfortable gesture of asking for money, feeling like they don't belong, and may even fight with the urge to do drugs. Nathaniel Ayers has no worries so that stereotype doesn't apply to him. He lives life day by day constantly playing music. With such a great passion for music he sets aside the everyday life that most people have and unwinds. The only thing that Nathaniel Ayers has to worry about is where the next place he is going to play his instruments. For him, music is life. Ayers would do anything to protect his instruments from being stolen or even tampered with. Lopez on the other hand has too much to worry about. Some of the many things that bothers him doesn't even relate to Ayers. The book states that “, Nathaniel is 100 percent off the books. No social security card, no drivers license, no address, no living will, no job, no lawn to mow, no phone call to return, no retirement to plan for and no rules except for his own” (Lopez 138). Nathaniel has no financial worries which is a major part of most peoples lives today.

During ones lifetime, A human always has the knack for wanting things. Most people want money and other materialistic items. There is never an end or a full satisfaction from something that humans want. The hunger to want stuff is the motivation for most but for Nathaniel that is not the case. Ayers has all he wants because for him, he wouldn't be complete without music and the satisfaction of playing everyday. When Lopez ran into the homeless man, Ayers was playing an old beaten up violin with only two strings attached. Putting on a one man show everyday either L.A.'s Pershing Square or in the beginning of the tunnel on 2nd and Hill, Ayers would enjoy playing his old violin (Lopez 3). In the movie *The Soloist*, Ayers talks about how he loves and enjoys playing music. All he ever wanted to do was go to Walt Disney Hall in LA and eventually does. In the book, Lopez talks about how he opened the paper to see the headline written by copy editor Saji Mathai: “HE’S GOT THE WORLD ON TWO

STRINGS" (Lopez 20). This statement is very much true do to the fact that he enjoys one thing only—and thats playing music.

Between Nathaniel Ayers and Steve Lopez, the two are very happy men. Both can be very stubborn at times but they have a friendship that nobody can break. Overall, Ayers seemed to be much happier than Lopez. Ayers was a free man and gets all the help he needs; thats if he ever needs it. Lopez has too much to worry about like family, work, and Ayers. Ayers only has to worry about his instruments which are safe ninety-nine percent of the time. Ayers may have developed schizophrenia at a young age but he doesn't let that stand in his way of his passion. All people can learn something from Ayers and that is that we don't need all the materialistic things in life in order to be happy. In the article " ,Stop Becoming Happy...Be Happy!" by Nancy Colier in *Inviting a Monkey to Tea* it states " , Happiness happens when we stop trying to figure out what we need to do to get a better future. Happiness happens when we live without a future, and without an intention for what this moment and this life should become." All anyone needs is a passion and close people to be around. If humans changed their perspective on living a happy life, things would be a lot simpler.

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Print.

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The Soloist. Dir. Joe Wright. Perf. Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr. DreamWorks SKG, Universal Pictures, StudioCanal, 2009. DVD.

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English B53

5 May 2015

Essay 2: Final Draft

During my last four previous years in high school if a teacher were to suspect a student hiding something they weren't supposed to have during school, a teacher would then call the school's security and principal to have his/her backpack searched. The student would have no say during the search. In "Feds Just Restricted the Law That Lets Police Seize Stuff from Innocent People," Sterbenz, Fuchs, and Reuters write, "Since then, the practice... "Civil Forfeiture," has allowed the police to seize cash or property that they suspect is tied to a crime even if the owner isn't charged with one." Police shouldn't have the right to seize and search.

It can affect one's personal lives by losing possibly everything they own and never getting it back which can be an emotional toll on a person. It would be impossible to get your assets back once the police get a hold of them. You can fight for your possessions back in court, but actually winning is hard (Sterbenz, Fuchs, and Reuters). People work hard to earn for their belongings and then the police having to seize it from them. In "Justice Department moves to rein in abuse in police seizures," Timothy M. Phelps states that "... Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. issued sweeping revisions to Justice Department regulations governing seizures of cash and other property from people who are not charged with a crime." Most police still may find other reasons to seize things from a person for personal self-interests.

The Police take the opportunity to take advantage of the seized possessions for their own selfish-ness and to get a higher annual pay. The federal program allowed police departments to

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keep the money or other property seized for their own budget (Phelps). The police may not think at the time how selfish that would be or if they have done damage to a family that could have possibly lost something that once meant something to them. Sterbenz, Fuchs, and Reuters states, "A department in Douglasville, Georgia bought an armored personnel carrier costing \$227,000, while another department in Amarillo, Texas spent \$637 on a coffee maker." Nonsense things police buy from innocent people's money, who were probably trying to fight back for their possessions in court.

Some people may think the police should have the ability to search and seize any possessions because the police are there to seize things from people who may look suspicious or can cause a threat. Even though search and seize can protect people from harm, police still search and seize possessions from innocent people, and that's not right of them to do. As I stated earlier, the police search and seize for selfishness reasons, not acknowledging a person's loss by losing possibly everything, and how it can affect them personally.

With the Fed's decision to put a stop to the civil forfeiture, it will stop the police from seizing cash or property from innocent people. The police would then only be allowed to take possessions from a person who is actually found guilty of committing a crime. I believe the Fed's overall are doing a good thing in removing the civil forfeitures.

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Mr. Bell

English 53

19 April 2015

Immigrants' Pursuit of Health Care

Despite the common fears expressed by people about the negative impacts that immigrants have to the country, they are essential to the growth and building of the country's economy. In pursuit of their American dream, however, the immigrants find themselves vulnerable when it comes to attainment of proper health care services. Accessibility of health care is core to the achievement of the American dream. There is a systematic fault in addressing the health care needs of immigrants in the country, including inaccessibility and language barrier.

There have been continued debates on the contributions that immigrants make in America. Some peoples argue that the immigrants are imperative and their presence has positive impacts in the country. On the other hand, some peoples argue from the view that the country incurs high costs maintaining the immigrants in the country. The average cost of meeting the health care needs of the immigrants is about 60\$, while the costs are higher when the doctor is not called upon and the sick person unfortunately dies (Nazario 5). There is no doubt therefore that some cost is incurred when dealing with the health concerns for the immigrants. The actual picture in this case is that the country has more than 10 million immigrants who can be termed as illegal. This group is costly to maintain and makes the government spend close to 300 billion annually on their issues. health care is one such sector that has been affected by this state of

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affairs, with the health care system requiring up to 5 billion dollars taking care of the essential health needs of the immigrants (Berlinger 7). The effect of these numbers is felt by the normal taxpayer whose rates increase in medical facilities and in the insurance. The emergency wing for example despite there being the federal regulations that the illegal immigrants do not qualify for health care reports over 90% of the respondents of emergency health care are the immigrants.

The other side of the debate however notes that the immigrants are key in keeping the American dream alive. They provide the spirit of hard work and fighting that is essential to pushing forward the economy of the country and thus, the American dream. This can be proved by the immigrants being responsible for most of the startup businesses and the general entrepreneurial activities (Ford 7).

The high number of the immigrants in the country, therefore, poses a challenge for the health care providers in the country. Various legislations, such as the Affordable Care Act of 2010, prevent them from being beneficiaries of the health benefits that the country has to offer. The point here is that in pursuit of their American dream, the aspect of health care disparity has been ignored. The immigrants are not allowed to apply for Medicaid, public or private health insurance or state based insurance programs. This places the immigrants, and by extension the health care providers, in a precarious position. The immigrants have health issues that require attendance by health care providers while the health care providers have an ethical obligation to provide services to those in needs. In search for solutions to this problem, the two groups often indulge in looking for alternative solutions to these health care problems - solutions that sometimes are not feasible or even helpful (Berlinger 4).

Various factors affect the provision of proper health care to the immigrants. One of the major factors is the legal status of the immigrants. The immigrants are categorized into three categories which include the naturalized citizens, the legal permanent residents and the undocumented immigrants. Given the procedures required for qualification from one status to another and the increase in illegal immigration, the number of the undocumented immigrants is on the increase. This group is legally not eligible for most public programs including health care. The restrictions are put in place in a bid to reduce the expenses that the government has to meet when it comes to health care of the immigrants who have continuously increased in number. This factor places the immigrants in a position, whereby, the achievement of health care proves to be troublesome.

Language barrier also comes into play as a factor that makes the immigrants disadvantaged in health care. Limited English proficiency for the immigrants has been proved to have an impact on the quality, frequency and likelihood of receiving health care for the immigrants. Here, those from countries with Limited English proficiency exhibit factors such as lack of insurance cover, limited preventive health care, less visits to caregivers and overall lack established care from health givers compared to the immigrants with English proficiency (Berlinger 15). Even in cases whereby health care is achieved for the immigrant, the quality is compromised and often unsatisfactory due to the communication issues. For the health care providers also, the language problem impacts the level of patient safety and raises the likelihood of unexpected reactions rising from the medical care given (Berlinger 18).

The residential areas that the immigrants occupy are another source for vulnerability when it comes to health care provision. In this case, the areas that the immigrants occupy can be

divided into two; the new destinations or the traditional destinations. The traditional destinations refer to areas that already have a high number of immigrants and which have already set-up structures that allow for the immigrants to get health care. The new destinations however are challenging since new social network and set up of institutions does not take care of immigrants. Here, the immigrants find it difficult to locate help when it comes to matters of health care. In conclusion, immigrants in the U.S. face a lot of challenges due to the inaccessibility of health care. These challenges come have not been adequately addressed despite the important role that they play in fuelling the economy as well as achievement of the overall American dream. Various factors both institution or individually oriented predispose the immigrants to vulnerability in health care.

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Name 1

Student Name

English B50 T/Th 1 – 3:05 p.m.

Professor Freeman

14 April 2015

Forced or Chose to be Homeless?

People all over the United States are homeless for many different reasons. Some people don't choose to be homeless and then some do choose the homeless life. But why do people choose to be homeless? People choose the homeless lifestyle because they are on their own not worrying about anything or anyone, they go as they please to wherever they want, and because they feel more comfortable being homeless.

Skid Row is a place in Los Angeles where there are homeless people all over the streets twenty-four hours a day. The movie *Lost Angels: Skid Row Is My Home* talks about Skid Row's tragedies and interviews people that are homeless on Skid Row. Kevin Cohan is a man that lives on Skid Row by choice. In Cohan's introduction he says he was homeless because he simply chose to, not because he couldn't find a home (*Lost Angels*). He didn't get forced to be homeless or couldn't find a home he just wanted to live on the streets. Not everyone is like Cohan though.

Everyone has different looks on life and everything about it. A man in the book *The Soloist* written by Steve Lopez has a different look to living on the streets. Lopez is a *Los Angeles Times* columnist that has come upon a mentally ill homeless man playing a violin named Nathaniel Ayers. Ayers caught Lopez's attention one day while he was walking to work when he heard Ayers playing his violin. Lopez was thinking that he could make an article out of him so

he perused in meeting him. Lopez starts to build a strong friendship with Ayers, he begins to produce feelings and want help him. He is trying really hard to get Ayers to move into an apartment that Lamp is willing to provide to get him off the streets. Lamp is a nonprofit organization that helps people off the streets, and into apartments. Lopez keeps pushing for Ayers to move into the apartment but Ayers replies he will not leave his belongings in a room unsupervised so someone can just walk in and steal everything he has (135). Being mentally ill makes it hard for him to feel safe with his possessions away from him and not in his control. He chose the life he has because he feels safe and in control of it all with no worries.

Not only is Lopez wanting help, but others that here about Ayers are willing to try as well. Ayers and Lopez got invited to Disney Hall on afternoon to see a music rehearsal. Disney Hall is a place where professional musicians perform shows. Ayers met a musician named Pete Snyder while at the hall. Snyder wants to give music lessons to Ayers, Lopez thinks this is great idea. Lopez comes up with a plan to try to get the lessons held in the apartment that is being held for Ayers, and hoping Ayers will like the apartment and considering moving into it. When Lopez brings up the idea to Ayers he replies, "I don't want to have anything to do with it." (142). Ayers is content with being homeless and wants nothing to do with living indoors. Ayers is happy with his life and doesn't want to change anything about it. Nobody or anything can change his mind on how feels.

Some people don't have a choice to be homeless in fact some are practically forced to onto the streets. In the article "Tent City, USA" by Hank Kalet. Kalet discusses about a tent city in Lakewood, NJ how difficult it can be for the residences of the city and how they got there. Kalet interviews several tent city members and sees if they are happy, what got them to the tent city, and much more. The reverend of the community Steve Bringham says, "Jobs have either

been outsourced or downsized or the building industry has collapse and so they don't have enough work to afford the cost of housing" (Bringham). A person losing their job and not being able to pay for the home they live in is a situations not many choose to do. When that happens, and they lose their home are literally homeless by being forced out not by choice.

Sometimes you have to put yourself into someone else's situation to understand things. Lopez one night wanted to stay the night with Ayers to get an idea what is like to be homeless and how Ayers lives. As they lay on the ground where Ayers has found his spot to sleep, Lopez asks if he would ever want to live in an apartment someday and Ayers replies, " I'm out here breathing fresh air and I'm not trapped in some apartment, cooped up and unheard of" (66). Ayers loves his life and wants nothing to do with living inside anywhere he likes to roam around and free.

The homeless lifestyle is different than any other type. Many people choose it and many people don't. Some choose the homeless life because they like to be on their own with no responsibilities, and have no one telling them what to do. They like to be comfortable and care free.

Word count: 866

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Prof. Wayland

English B50 MW 10:30

28 Apr. 2015

Food Essay

Food Troubles

Today America faces a big problem regarding our food and the way we eat. Lots of Americans eat too much, and a lot of the food that we consume is not nutritional and is unhealthy for us. There are lots of reasons why food in America is in shambles. Many of us do not see the problem because we are not informed enough on the issue. Over the years, the consumption of the food that we eat has increased greatly. America is surrounded by problems regarding our foods and diets, which ultimately affect us more than we know.

In America, everywhere we go fast food restaurants can be found; that gives everyone easy access to unhealthy foods. As Americans, we love to eat especially if it is cheap. Both grocery stores and fast food restaurants offer cheap, unhealthy foods. Restaurants like McDonalds, Taco Bell, and Jack in the Box all have cheap foods on the menu which lets people eat a lot more for less. In the article "Junk-Food Facts," found on Web MD Weight Loss Clinic, Elaine Magee, MPH RD, writes, "Not only are fast foods terribly healthy, one study indicates there may be something about fast food that encourages gorging." Fast food restaurants take advantage of people wanting their food that they now stay open longer. Restaurants like McDonalds even offer a twenty-four hour drive through service to help satisfy those midnight carvings. Nowadays, Fast food restaurants will do anything to give us easy access to their

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unhealthy foods; as long as they keep profit that is. Unfortunately, having easy access to unhealthy food has consequences.

A problem today that correlates with food is overeating. It is sad that over eating does not only affect adults but also children; it is a problem that affects many families in the United States. There are many reasons why our foods lead to over eating. First, a lot of us like sweet and salty foods, and we can easily become addicted to foods that taste good to us; it is easy to become addicted to unhealthy food especially since it is traditional in the United States to have an appetizer and desert to go along with our meal. Unfortunately eating a lot can become a bad habit that is hard to break. McDonalds does not help when it comes to over eating because they offer supersizes with any meal. A lot of times we do not watch what we eat, and that can easily make us go over our calorie limit for the day. Over the years, our consumption of all kinds of foods has gone up. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), "In 2000, total meat consumption reached 195 pounds per person, 57 pounds above average annual consumption in the 1950's." That shows that we eat a lot more today, than we did in the past. Our knowledge of food overall is not the best so we do not know how much food we should consume regularly. Simply for those reasons food can lead to over eating.

The problem with food, however, does not start in the stores or kitchen; it starts at the farms where the animals are kept. In the article "The Unhealthy Meat Market," found in *New York Times*, Nicholas Kristof states, "Tyson, one of the nation's 100 biggest companies, slaughters 135,000 head of cattle a week, along with 391,000 hogs and an astonishing 41 million chickens." Lots of people are unaware of what happens behind the scenes. Sometimes the living conditions can be harsh for the animals because of overcrowded and unsanitary areas; that can lead to animals getting sick and spreading diseases. Continuously giving antibiotics to animals

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can eventually hit a wall. There's going to be a point where the bacteria will evolve to where it will resist to any antibiotics. If unhealthy meat were to go to local stores, many Americans would be at serious risk for disease. Ultimately, everyone's awareness on the problems of the living conditions of the animals can help prevent any future accidents.

Today, food is to blame when many Americans have health issues. We are surrounded by so much unhealthy foods that we are put at risk every day. A continuation of a bad diet can cause serious chronic diseases; it should be our priority to avoid such serious problems. Today heart disease is the leading cause of death in America. It can be a shocking result especially when compared to death caused by smoking cigarettes. Other examples of health issues that come from our foods are diabetes and high blood pressure. They may not be a leading cause of death but that does not mean many people are not affected. There are many ways to avoid chronic diseases but the first change we should make should be with our food and the way we eat.

As a country, we cannot give in to the unhealthy foods we are surrounded by. Changing our diet one step at a time can really make a difference in our lives. It could be as simple as choosing to eat at home instead of fast food; even portioning meals can help a lot. Making sure to eat more nutritious foods instead of eating empty calories can go a long way in our diets. In the article "Science Compared Every Diet and the Winner is Real Food," found on *The Atlantic*, James Hamblin states, "Improvements in diets are clearly associated with significant lengthening of lifespan and dramatic decrease in risk of most chronic diseases." Our foods and diets should be our main priority, and we should not let food affect us the way it is today.

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