

2017/2018

College & Career Composition EOC #1

Reading

Read the passage, excerpted from an article titled “Followers Flex Their Muscles,” which challenges the idea that leaders are more important than followers in our society. As you read the passage, pay close attention to the author’s claims that followers play a more important role than leaders in society.

Why do we obsess about leadership and spurn followership? Hard-wiring is the easy explanation. Like other animals, humans organize themselves hierarchically, focusing on those at the top as opposed to those at the bottom. But we dwell on leaders and ignore followers for other reasons as well. Recent changes in culture and technology further skew our attention toward those with power and influence and away from those without. As a result, the so-called leadership industry is booming.

Leader-centrism, though, is not only misguided, it is mistaken. Followers have always mattered more than we generally believe. And as the arc of history testifies, they matter more now than ever. Think, for example, of the American and the French revolutions, the 19th-century rallying cry “Workers of the World Unite,” and the 20th-century civil rights and women’s movements. Each of these watershed moments was about one thing: the redistribution of power from those higher up to those lower down.

This trend shows no sign of slowing down. As a consequence of the same recent changes in culture and technology, followers have become more powerful than ever, and leaders less. Increased follow-power is not only about toppling ineffective leaders but also about circumventing them – about how ordinary people are simply taking matters into their own hands. Most of the recent sociopolitical movements fall into this category, as do the countless single-issue initiatives that are the 21st- century consequence of disappointments and dissatisfactions that spring to life with the mere stroke of a computer key.

The ability to drive change emanates not from single individuals but from people without power, authority, or influence who harness their collective passions in the interest of their collective causes. Organizations like Greenpeace and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), both once deemed radical, turned out to spearhead mass movements. And people previously considered powerless have been heard from in newly powerful ways. Gays and lesbians are staking their claims to legitimacy and equity in growing numbers. And demands now made by or on behalf of people who are mentally or physically impaired far transcend those made only a couple of decades ago.

The point is that those of lower rank matter. They matter even when they do little or nothing – for the effect of doing little or nothing is to support the status quo. The temper of the times, then, is determined not by leaders, “best” or otherwise. It is determined, as well, by followers who simply support the status quo or who at least try to create change.

Write a multi-paragraph persuasive essay that argues whether or not you agree or disagree with the claim that leaders are more important than followers. Use evidence from the passage to support your claims as well as your own evidence.

As you write, follow the suggestions below:

- **Be sure your essay has an introduction, body, and conclusion.**
- **Agree or disagree with the claim in the article.**
- **Use details from the passage to support your claim.**
- **Write clearly and check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.**

Rubric – Persuasive Essay

	Ideas and Evidence	Organization	Language	Subtotal
ADVANCED 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction skillfully pulls the reader in, the writer clearly states a claim Logical reasons and relevant evidence convincingly supports the claim The concluding section capably summarizes the claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reasons and evidence are organized consistently and logically Varied transitions logically connect reasons and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writing maintains a formal style Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures vary and have a rhythmic flow Grammar and usage are correct 	
COMPETENT 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction could do more to grab reader's attention, the writer states a claim Most reasons and evidence support the writer's claim, but they could be more convincing Counterclaims are anticipated, but the counter arguments need to be developed The concluding section restates the claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization of reasons and evidence is confusing in a few places A few more transitions are needed to connect the reasons and evidence to the claims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The style is informal in a few places Sentence beginnings, lengths, and structures vary somewhat Some grammatical and usage errors are repeated in the essay 	
LIMITED 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction is incomplete; the writer identifies a claim, but the position is not clearly stated The reasons and evidence are not always logical or relevant Counterclaims are anticipated but not addressed logically The concluding section includes an incomplete summary of the claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The organization of reasons and evidence is logical in some place, but it often doesn't follow a pattern Transitions are not adequately used to connect the reasons and evidence to support claim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The style becomes informal in many places Sentence structures barely vary, and some fragments or run-on sentences are present Several spelling and capitalization mistakes occur, and punctuation is inconsistent Grammar and usage are incorrect in many places 	
EMERGING 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The introduction is confusing Significant supporting reasons and evidence are missing Counterclaims are neither anticipated or addressed The concluding section is missing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A logical organization is not used; reasons and evidence are presented randomly Transitions are not used, making the essay difficult to understand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The style is inappropriate for the essay Repetitive sentence structure, fragments, run-on sentences make the writing hard to follow Spelling and capitalization are often incorrect, and punctuation is missing in most places Most grammatical and usage errors change the meaning of ideas 	
			Total Score	