

Sample Essay with Online Corrections

"Success"

Success is not a material object that can be felt, rather, it is something that ties within the heart of each and every person. Everyone is not going to have the same definitions of success. If they did, the world would be a very boring place. To some people success can be measured by the material things in life, while others would be more willing to give up all the material objects just to help someone else. In my opinion, if everyone was a little more considerate, the people who are less fortunate might have a better chance of obtaining success. If your goal in life was to own the biggest house in Billings, and you worked honestly and with integrity to obtain this house, even if you fall short of your goal, hold your head up high because you reached you potential. So many people are given so much talent and they can't or do not care to use it. No one is qualified to put a single meaning on success, but if you as an individual worked up to your potential, in my opinion you have achieved success. Maybe some people will never understand anything but material success. In the end, possibly, some will understand it really wasn't all the material objects, rather the self-satisfaction of looking back on life and being able to say I was a decent caring human being and that is truly success in life.

Comment: This is a comma splice. "Rather" is not a coordinating conjunction and cannot be connected to the preceding sentence with just a comma. Doing so creates a run-on sentence.

Comment: I like where you are going here. Can you give more of this through specific examples or details?

Comment: Can you think of an example of this to include? It would strengthen your paper to add specific examples of the things you discuss.

Comment: There really is no situation in an academic setting where the use of second person pronouns (you, your) is appropriate. Try to rephrase your paper in third person (he, she, someone, a person).

Comment: When you have two independent clauses (clauses that can stand on their own as sentences) separated by a coordinating conjunction (but, or, yet, for, and, not, so), there needs to be a comma before the conjunction. In this case, the comma would go before "and."

Comment: You have made a good start as far as generating ideas here. However, I am not really sure what your thesis was in this essay. What is your main point or purpose in writing the paper? What are you trying to say, exactly? Also, you need to work on the organization of the paper. A strong thesis statement will help, but then you need to organize the paper into an introductory paragraph (ending with the thesis statement), body paragraphs outlining the major aspects of your thesis (be sure to give specific examples for each point discussed), and a concluding paragraph restating the thesis and summing up your point of view or argument. You might try creating an outline of the paper once you've come up with a strong thesis and see where there are holes that need to be filled in. Try reworking the paper using these suggestions and then send it back to us so we can address some of the smaller concerns, such as punctuation and grammar. Thank you!

Sample essay taken from *MSU-Billings Tutor Manual*, Edited by Wanda June Alexander, 1995 edition.