

## Mixed-Mode Essay

In this part, first, you will read and analyze a sample essay, in which each paragraph of the body uses a different mode (for example, narration, exposition, argumentation, etc.) Next, you will choose a topic and write a mixed-mode essay.

**Use a different mode in each paragraph of the body of the essay.**

### Exercise 1

- 1) Read the essay, “Thoughts about Life.”
- 2) From the box below, choose the mode that is used for each part of the essay. Use each mode one time.

Modes

• Comparison and Contrast

✓ • Exposition

• Argumentation

• Describing a person

• Narration (a story)

**Topic:** What I can tell the younger generation about life.

Introduction  
(No mode)

(Introduction type: Quotation)

Exposition

Thoughts about Life

<sup>1</sup> My favorite teacher often told me, “Find a need and fill it.” In other words, he was saying that I shouldn’t just follow what everyone else was doing. Instead, I should find something that no one else was doing but that people wanted. That became one of my goals in life. I have also learned useful suggestions about life from many other people who were older than me. Here, I would like to share with the younger generation what I have learned about how to have a happy and successful life.

<sup>2</sup> It seems that there are three things that are necessary to be happy in life. First, people should have a good family relationship. This does not necessarily mean that they need to have children. It doesn’t even mean that they need a spouse. It means that they have someone or several people whom they feel close to. In addition to close relationships, they

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should do work that they enjoy. Because people spend so many hours working, if they hate their job, they will dislike a large percent of their life. I spend 50 hours a week doing my job, and I love those 50 hours. Finally, it's important to have something that they enjoy during their free time. It can be a hobby, sports, art or even volunteer work. These three elements can make them feel fulfilled.

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<sup>3</sup> The younger generation should not feel regret about past experiences. When I was a teenager in the U.S., I always wanted to live and work in a foreign country. When I was 17 years old, I found a summer job in Canada at a resort. One week before leaving for Canada, my younger brother got very sick, so my parents told me that I had to cancel my plans and stay home to help take care of him. I was very upset and refused to talk to my father during that summer. For 20 years, I thought about that Canadian experience and felt regret about not going. However, last year, I learned that my brother had decided to become a doctor after seeing how much I helped him when he was sick. I now realize that I had only one chance to help my brother, but I still have opportunities to go to Canada. Thus, I wasted 20 years of feeling regret.

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<sup>4</sup> People from a younger generation may have a life similar to mine in some ways, but it will surely be different in other ways. Like me, they will have computers to improve their lives. However, their computers will do more work for them, such as preparing their meals and giving them information while driving their car. Likewise, they will have good medicine to help them live longer, just as I have. However, thanks to new medicines, they will suffer less as they get older. For my heart, I have to take medicine which makes me sleepy. Unlike me, when they get older, if they have heart problems, the medicine that they take will probably not have such a side-effect. I hope that they can appreciate these improvements.

<sup>5</sup> Other people can have a positive effect on younger people if they are able to be aware. When I was growing up, there was a man named Joe, who worked for my father in his clothing store. Joe wasn't very handsome; he was chubby and almost bald. He hated school, so he never graduated from high school. However, he was very artistic. He was a great salesman because he understood colors, and, as a result, he could help customers choose the right clothes. Many of his customers were very important people, for example, presidents of large companies. They had complete trust in his judgments about clothes. He had a talent, and he used it to help many people, namely his customers. I learned from Joe that if we use our talents, we can overcome our weak points.

° Some people believe that success comes from being talented and that a talent is something that comes from our genes. In other words, they claim that a successful person is actually just lucky to have a special talent. However, I disagree with their opinions. We may be born with a tendency to be good at something, but unless we work hard at it, we will never become successful. For example, one of my favorite authors is Barbara Kingsolver. Many people tell her that they admire her because she is so talented. They seem to believe that writing great books is easy for her because she has a special talent. Nevertheless, she claims that her success comes from hard work. She revises every page over and over again; sometimes it will take her six hours to write one good page.

<sup>7</sup>I often felt that I had made many mistakes in my life. Sometimes, I felt that I was a failure. Nevertheless, when I look at the information that I wrote above, I realize that I have learned a lot about life. Perhaps, my life is not a complete success, but I think that I have a philosophy that has helped me over the years.

### Conclusion (No mode)

**(Conclusion type:**  
Your experience with  
the topic.)

- ❶ Choose one of the topics below.
- ❷ Write an introduction. (See p. 50 for introduction techniques.)
- ❸ Write an essay in which you use a different mode for each paragraph in the body. The modes are:
  - Description      • Narration      • Exposition
  - Compare and Contrast   •Cause and Effect   • Process
  - Extended Definition   •Argumentation
- ❹ Write a conclusion. (See p. 53 for conclusion techniques.)

### **Topics for a Mixed-Mode Essay**

- Which one of these characteristics is the most important for a successful life: honesty, courage, friendliness, attractiveness, intelligence, good health, good attitude or good humor?
- What advice would you give to a student from your country who is planning to come to this school and town?
- Are subjects like music and art a waste of time and money for a school to offer?
- Is plagiarism a serious problem? Should students who plagiarize be severely punished?
- Many people believe that there is no such thing as bad luck. They believe, in other words, that misfortune (a hardship) is caused by bad planning or incompetence (such as a lack of skill or stupidity). Do you agree with this opinion?