

**A Supported Opinion Essay on Conflict Level 4, Sample 1****A****Epidemic! The Plague of Casinos**

Intended Audience: 18+

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It was received by most citizens of the town as a promise of new jobs, tourists, tax revenues and more, but instead, with it, it brought disaster. Shortly after its coming, the innocent town turned into a nightmare. Crime flourished, bankruptcy escalated and suicide rates went through the roof. You'd think that this mania would be terminated, but it wasn't, instead it was welcomed by other unsuspecting cities. Slowly, it is spreading throughout North America. It's called gambling. As more and more casinos open around Canada and the States, the crime rates are rising with alarming speed. The innocent gambling quickly becomes addiction, which is a pathway to pain and misery. As it effects more and more families, addiction consequences effect the whole community. Gambling and addiction also have a shockingly close relationship to suicides.

Gambling is an extremely dangerous practice, as it requires an extreme amount of money to continue playing, and as only a few people will win, many people lose great amounts of money. It is also extremely addictive, as people crave the results and the money they could possibly win. Gambling addiction is not just a bad habit, it is a disorder that is difficult to cure. As many people lose their life savings, it creates home problems, and sometimes results in the losing of their homes. This can lead to divorce, loss of jobs, loss of friends, and often leads to suicide.

Casinos are often both basic and non-basic industries. A basic industry is one that supports the local economy by bringing in money from outside the area, while a non-basic industry circulates money just in the local economy. Since the only "outsiders" who would gamble at a given casino would be tourists, it is mainly a non-basic industry. This means that the opening of casinos in a city effects the whole community. Also, many problems that stem from the casinos form chain reactions that effect many people.

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An example of this is when one prominent figure in the community loses a great deal of money at a casino, he would likely get depression, which would lead to home problems, business problems, and affect every person that he had contact with.

On August 26, 1999, the LA Sun released an article with the headline "Atlantic City Casinos Hit By Wave of Suicides". The article told of a German tourist who jumped to his death off a ten story casino parking garage. Though he left no suicide note, it was apparent that he had recently been gambling, and had likely lost a great deal of money. The article went on to tell of two other recent suicides, directly related to gambling. Atlantic City is not the only place that has had suicides related to gambling. In Gulfport, Mississippi, suicides increased by 213 percent (from 24 to 75) in the first two years after the casinos arrived. These statistics show the direct relation between gambling and suicide. Many people, after gambling their life savings away, see no alternative than to end their life. When gambling is so directly related to suicide, it is extremely surprising that casinos can legally operate.

On December 10, 1997, Cardinal Thomas Williams of New Zealand said "the correlation of casino gambling with addiction, family violence, suicide and bankruptcy is fast emerging." It is quickly becoming more recognized by many people around the world what negative aspects gambling has on an individual, family and community. As many casinos are opening presently around North America, this problem is increasing rapidly. Because casinos are being embraced by many communities because of the promises of new jobs and such, little is done to stop them. People around North America who recognize the extreme negative aspects of casinos and gambling must take a stand to make gambling illegal once again. This problem can be eliminated, but first the public

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must be informed of its negative aspects. If everyone takes a stand, together we can make a difference, before it's too late. We must act quickly, because the deadly plague of addiction to gambling is seeping through the veins of North America and infecting many communities. Yours may be the next victim.

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## WORKS CITED

Attorney General J. Joseph Curran, Jr., *The House Never Loses and Maryland Cannot Win: Why Casino Gaming Is a Bad Idea*, October 16, 1995.

[Http://www.catholicinternet.org/issue/archives/DCtext/25dec10%2Cvol.8%2Cno.49txt/49newt3.htm](http://www.catholicinternet.org/issue/archives/DCtext/25dec10%2Cvol.8%2Cno.49txt/49newt3.htm). June 5, 2000

<http://www.family.org/cforum/research/papers/A0001759.html>. June 5, 2000

**Teacher’s Notes****Knowledge/Understanding**

- The impressive introduction masterfully engages the reader.
- The essay shows an outstanding understanding of how to integrate the structural elements.
- The writer’s position is presented in a thorough and exemplary manner.

**Thinking/Inquiry**

- The argument is compelling and insightful and is thoroughly supported with specific, relevant evidence.
- The writer shows a mature understanding of the various aspects of the problem (e.g., “Gambling addiction is not just a bad habit, it is a disorder that is difficult to cure.”).

**Communication**

- The essay shows a highly effective use of paragraph elements.
- A controlling idea is clearly established and successfully sustained throughout the essay.
- The writer uses words and phrases with a high degree of appropriateness (e.g., “. . . the deadly plague of addiction to gambling is seeping through the veins of North America and infecting many communities”; “. . . casinos are being embraced by many communities”; “. . . which is a pathway to pain and misery”).

**Application**

- The writer uses language conventions with a high degree of accuracy and effectiveness, making very few errors (e.g., confuses “effect” and “affect”).
- Sources are identified with a high degree of accuracy.

**Comments/Next Steps**

- Some details/evidence lack specific relevance to the main idea.
- Some details need expansion to increase their relevance and make them more compelling.
- The writer should suggest solutions rather than stating only consequences.

## A Supported Opinion Essay on Conflict Level 4, Sample 2

A

### What It Means To Be The Ugly Duckling

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### What It Means To Be The Ugly Duckling

Many children's stories describe one individual being singled out and tormented. It is always the poor relative, the step sister or the ugly duckling who suffers at the hands of others. This is discrimination. Discriminating is the act of prejudging and stereotyping people (Nelson 396). It may affect any one regardless of sex, race or beliefs. Discrimination is harmful and detrimental to all of society. It affects the way people feel about themselves and their self esteem.

In the poem "Two Prisoners" written by Raymond Souster, there is a verse that shows discrimination. " Those young punks are going back to the Don where they belong..." (Souster 70). The quote illustrates a spectator watching, as two young boys (assumed criminals) walk handcuffed, away from a courthouse. The spectator assumes that because the boys are young and obviously in trouble with the law, that they are "punks". Not only is the spectator assuming that the boys are guilty and that all of the information is known, but he is also assuming that the boys are going to the Don Jail. This form of discrimination is called stereotyping. Stereotyping is "when a fixed unvarying form is given to something" (Nelson 1337). When people stereotype teenagers like this, they stereotype teenagers in general, not individually. Being stereotyped affects all teenagers. They are given a reputation that in some cases is true, but for the most part, is inaccurate. Every day teenagers are treated differently because of their age. This assumption affects the way that teenagers feel about themselves and the way that they think.

In addition, many people, not only in the past, but even now in the present, experience discrimination because of their culture. Cultural racism is "prejudice or discrimination based on race or culture" (Nelson 1130). The story "Montreal 1962" written by Shauna Singh Baldwin is about a woman who immigrated to Canada from India. The following quote describes how the

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character feels. “No one said then, you must be reborn white skinned and clean shaven to show it- to survive.” (Baldwin 228). This quote illustrates only white skinned people could make a good living. This is discriminating because not every one was given a fair chance at earning a good living. Furthermore, racism goes beyond ones physical appearance and into ones culture as well. The poem “Equal Opportunity” written by Jim Wong-Chu is also about racism, not based on appearance, rather it illustrates prejudice against a culture. “ There was a rule the chinese could only ride the last two cars of the trains that is until a train derailed killing all those in front... a new rule was made the chinese must ride the front two cars of the trains...” (Wong-Chu 226). In the past, cultural racism has played a significant role in events. Well known examples of this are: the crusades; the rise of Nazism in the nineteen thirties and nineteen forties; and the Negro slavery. Cultural racism still exists today and it affects the everyday lives of many peoples. It is promoted by groups like the Klux Klan (KKK). The KKK supports White Supremacy and there are other groups like these. Cultural racism is dangerous and destructive to society.

Furthermore sexism is “discrimination based on gender especially against women. Attitudes, conditions, or behaviors that promote stereotyping of social roles based on gender” (Nelson 1254). The story “Think Like a Weight lifter Think Like a Woman” written by Kate Braid is a story about a woman who works on a construction site, but is the only woman who is working there. She feels inferior to her male co-workers. She also feels isolates and out of place. A quote that proves this is “ And now because I need this job, and because every eye is watching the girl...” (Braid 65). This quote proves that because the character is aware of how her co-workers are all watching her, she feels that she has to prove herself to them. The next quote proves how

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sexism changes the way people feel about themselves and how it lowers self esteem. “No. I will never be carpenter, I think, never able to work like these men.” (Braid 65). This quote is in a part of the story when the main character has thought that because she is a woman she will not be able to work like the men and that they are superior to her. This shows how her self esteem has been lowered because of the sexist attitudes surrounding her. Sexism (although) is generally applied to women, can also be an issue with men.

In summary, discrimination is a fact of life that affects everyone, regardless of appearance, gender, or race whether it is the step sister or the ugly duckling. Discrimination has been a problem in the past, and remains is today in the present. Discrimination should not exist, but it does. It is a major conflict that society must learn to resolve. Society should remember to follow the golden rule: treat others the way that you want to be treated, because often the ugly duckling turns out to be the beautiful swan.

Work Cited Page

Braid, Kate "Think Like a Weight Lifter Think Like a Woman" Sightlines 9. Edited by Alice Barlow-Kedves et al. Scarborough, Ontario, Prentice Hall Canada, 1999.

Nelson Canadian Dictionary of the English Language. Scarborough, Ontario, International Thomas Publishing Company, 1988.

Singh Baldwin, Shauna "Montreal 1962" Sightlines 9. Edited by Alice Barlow-Kedves et al. Scarborough, Ontario, Prentice Hall Canada, 1999.

Souster, Raymond "Two Prisoners" Sightlines 9. Edited by Alice Barlow-Kedves et al. Scarborough, Ontario, Prentice Hall Canada, 1999.

Wong-Chu, Jim "Equal Opportunity" Sightlines 9. Edited by Alice Barlow-Kedves et al. Scarborough, Ontario, Prentice Hall Canada, 1999.

**Teacher's Notes****Knowledge/Understanding**

- There is a clear introduction that catches the reader's attention, defines terms, and establishes the writer's opinion.
- The body paragraphs are thoroughly developed with topic sentences and supporting detail.
- The conclusion echoes the introduction.

**Thinking/Inquiry**

- The supporting details thoroughly expand upon the issues raised with information clearly relevant to the topic.
- The evidence is persuasive, convincing, and specific.
- Details are frequently drawn from literary sources such as poems and stories.

**Communication**

- Internal paragraphs are structured with a high degree of coherence and unity.
- Mini-conclusions are included for each body paragraph.
- The writer has a single controlling idea connected with a high degree of effectiveness using transitional words (e.g., "in addition", "furthermore", "in summary").
- The diction is appropriately formal (e.g., "Cultural racism is dangerous and destructive to society.").

**Application**

- The writer uses language conventions with a high degree of accuracy and effectiveness.
- Only a few punctuation problems are apparent.
- Sources are identified with a high degree of accuracy, including titles, authors, and page numbers.

**Comments/Next Steps**

- Paragraphs need to be clearly delineated with indentation.
- Specific details are needed to connect the body paragraphs directly to the “ugly duckling” theme.
- Titles should not have double punctuation (e.g., italics *or* quotation marks should be used, as appropriate, but not both).
- Word choice occasionally needs attention (e.g., “quote” should be “quotation”).
- The evidence supporting the conclusion could be more compelling, concise, and emphatic.