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However this improvement does not come without a price.

The most important loss we suffer due to these fast foods is quality. These fast foods are lower in nutritional value and contain less minerals and vitamins. Further they have high calories that result in weight gain, and that in turn leads to heart diseases and other problems. Further, they have added flavors, colors and preservatives that are not always very helpful to our health.

These preserved food have also taken away the natural taste and benefits of fresh foods from our lives. We now depend upon artificial flavorings to make a fish taste like a fish. However we cannot get the natural taste of fresh foods from preserved foods.

We have lost the fun of cooking because of these fast foods. Cooking used to be an art and people enjoyed cooking and the satisfactions they got by cooking a tasty meal. Further, cooking is the time when family members gathered and enjoyed their time together. However with less time devoted to cooking, the chances for such meals are now rare.

All these illustrations point out that although fast foods and preserved foods are unavoidable in today's busy world, we must not totally neglect the advantages of fresh foods. We must sometimes take time with our families to prepare a delicious meal and enjoy it together with the ones we love the most.

20

Topic 4 **Experience is the best teacher**

Books are considered to be the source of all knowledge, but all that one learns through a book is only of theoretical nature in the form of ideas and concepts. It is essential to utilize them in a real environment and experience the knowledge that is learned from books.

- 25 Learning is nothing but understanding the world around us. Books, no doubt are a great source of knowledge as it gives us an idea about a particular subject in detail. But all that one could learn from it is limited to the level of knowing how a certain phenomenon occurs, or how a certain concept works. The knowledge gained through books alone cannot help anyone, because what one learns through the
- 30 books should be put in to use to harvest the benefits. For instance, a person who wants to learn driving can go through various manuals and guides that teach people how to drive, but all this knowledge is useful only when you are actually driving the car on the roads. It would be an utter waste of time if one just reads the books and does not use them for practical purpose.
- 35 Learning through experience is always a lot different from learning through books. Let us consider the same example of a person wanting to learn to drive: even if he goes through every book that is available on driving, still it cannot qualify him as an expert driver. This is because of the fact that books about driving can only teach people traffic rules and provide solutions on how to handle certain

situations. The situations faced by a driver could be totally different from what he had learnt from a book. Sometimes we find that the real environment is quite different from the one perceived by us through reading books. This is the very reason why, even in educational institutions, all theoretical classes are followed by
5 practical sessions.

Learning through experience can also be more effective than learning through books because one does not envision everything on his own, but is given a chance to experience the reality. The art of driving can be enjoyed only when we are behind the wheels and not when reading it in books. Moreover, any book is
10 actually an account of past experiences, i.e. it is based on the experiences of people who tried to develop a new idea. The books are their experiences, telling us what they already have tried. Thus from their experiences we can correct ourselves and thus save valuable time and resources. It helps us to concentrate on their failures and to correct them, but they alone cannot teach us everything we need to
15 know. The knowledge learned through books alone cannot help us to face all the exigencies that we would face in real life situations; we have to practice on our own.

Books are like a guiding light in one's pursuit for knowledge. But it is left to everyone of us to experience it first hand and learn new things for the betterment
20 of their lives. So the notion "experience is the best teacher" is perfectly true.

Topic 4 **Are books more important than experience?**

It is true that "Not everything that is learned is contained in books." A person can learn a lot and retain what he learns through experience. In my opinion life's valuable lessons are learnt from experience and so the knowledge gained from
25 experience is more important.

Books are a great source of information. A person in his lifetime cannot experience everything, but by reading a book on a particular subject he can gain knowledge over that subject in less time. There are books available on any subject that one needs. However experience seems more important to me.

30 Suppose a person living in the United States wants to learn about India. He has two options: he could visit India and learn about the people and places there or he could just pick up a book about India and read it. The first option will be expensive and time consuming, but at the same time it gives one first hand information and a sense of satisfaction while the second option is less expensive
35 and saves time.

A person can gain knowledge and learn many valuable lessons through his/her own practical experiences and also the experiences of others. The knowledge learnt from experience is very likely to be retained in our memory for a long period of time. The conclusions that we draw from what we learn would be from
40 our practical experience instead of accepting the conclusion drawn in the book by

knowledge gained from books is second hand knowledge whereas knowledge that are gained from experience is firsthand and it takes a person through the different hidden intricacies of the task and makes him learn the knowledge in a practical manner.

5

Topic 4 **Are books more important than experience?**

To my opinion, books and real experience are two completely different sources of knowledge. It is really difficult to determine which of the two to be of much greater importance, because normally knowledge gained from experience complements that acquired from books, but not substitutes it. Comparing the
10 features of the two sources, I would stress the following points of differences.

First, the knowledge gained from books is, to a certain extent, of abstract nature. Books are normally the collections of facts and general rules. Books give us the most complete overview of a subject in a more or less structured manner, covering all known details and exceptions. In some way, books are concentrations
15 of knowledge and experiences of many generations of people, given in a concise and comprehensive way. Obtaining such knowledge just from the personal experience would take an immense amount of time or even would not be possible at all. The practical experience, gives us not general knowledge, but particular skills. Without these particular skills, all the knowledge gained from books might be just
20 a useless collection of facts and rules. The best example of the importance of practical experience that comes to my mind is learning a foreign language. One can learn a lot of vocabulary and grammar rules, memorize many exceptions, but without actual applying of all this knowledge in real life conversations, writing letters and listening to real speeches, one can hardly be proficient in the language.
25 The importance of having practical skills is also proved by the fact that most employers appreciate working experience above all grades and diplomas.

Another point of contrast between books and experience is that for some subject, such as economy of sociology, a book may represent a point of view of its author or authors. The conclusions given in the book might be out of date, or might be
30 biased by the personal attitude of the authors. In this case, practical experience helps to build up personal perspective on the matter, to bring the matter up to date.

On the psychological grounds, learning from experience is much more efficient than reading books. Reading books is in most cases a passive action, which can be
35 done without much effort. Despite the fact that there are people who can memorize thousands of papers, for a normal person, such work does not result in a deep, comprehensive knowledge base. On the contrary, doing things in practice, people have to overcome various difficulties, get through unknown areas, and pay attention to small details. The reward for these efforts is much more
40 comprehensive and profound knowledge.

Summarizing the said above I want to admit that both books and practice is important in the process of learning. While none of the two can be considered as absolute substitute for the other, I would place the practical experience in a little bit advance position in terms of importance.

5

Topic 4 **Are books more important than experience?**

We gain our knowledge about the world and our life from two sources: from experience and from books. These two resources are both important, but which of them is more important?

Knowledge from books forms a very important part of our knowledge structure.

- 10 In schools and colleges, we learn knowledge that is fundamental to our future career. We learn knowledge from books in order to make our contributions to this society in the future. A student learns mathematic equations and other scientific knowledge and become a scientist or engineer. We will be illiterate and ignorant without learning knowledge from books. Moreover, we acquire knowledge about
- 15 life and the world by reading books, magazines and newspapers. This is also very important, as we cannot experience everything all by ourselves. Therefore books are a very important source of knowledge.

On the other hand, we cannot learn everything from books. "Experience is the best teacher" is an old cliché but I agree with it. The most important, and

- 20 sometimes the hardest lessons we learn in life come from our participation in situations. We learn how to get along with others or how to gain self-respect from our experience, not from books. We cannot learn emotional feelings, such as love and care, through books; they come from our real life experience. Knowledge from experience is also a very important supplement to knowledge from books.
- 25 Needless to say both learning sources, books and experience, are very important to us. But in my opinion knowledge from experience is more important, because without knowledge from experience, it is impossible to get a real understanding of knowledge from books, and how to apply this knowledge to real world situations.

Topic 5 **Should a factory be built in your community?**

- 30 I strongly oppose to the plan that a large factory be built near my community. My arguments for this point are listed as follows.

The first and foremost reason lies in the virtually inevitable pollution that a large factory is bound to bring about. Considering the limit of the present technology, hardly any kind of factory is able to secure its mass production without the

- 35 slightest pollution to the environment. Once a factory enters my community, and embarking on its continuous activities, even a tiny element of pollution will by all

odds accumulate to a dangerous degree that will eventually cause a serious damage to the environment of my community. To think of the exhaust gas or water and the noise given off by a factory will help you fully understand this idea. Cities have already suffered from those nightmares of modern industry that shows no signs
5 of ceasing to emerge. No one would like to behold the air of his or her community is no longer clean, or to find his or her community totally removed of hush.

Besides pollution, which is to some extent an invisible but deadly threat to my community, there is an immediate problem that a large factory will force to
10 confront with: it will occupy a large area near or of my community, which should be more likely exploited as a public site that benefit all residents in the community. For example provided a suitable area is available, it is more worth a gymnasium that will enhance the standard of health of every resident in the community, than a big factory leading to disgusting noise and suffocating gas.

15 Perhaps, some people would like to vote for such a plan of building a factory simply on an economical ground that a large factory will probably stimulate a prosperous future of the area around. But unfortunately, history has witnessed numerous counterexamples. Many factories neither attain an economical success nor left the environment intact. So I doubt this declaration.

20 Taking into account all these factors, I find the disadvantages weigh much heavier than the possible advantages. Therefore I strongly disagree the establishment of a large factory near my community.

Topic 5 **Should a factory be built in your community?**

25 As the company has announced to build a factory right here in our community, I am so eager to say a few words toward this issue. I really think that if the plan is carried out in the near future finally, there will be much more disadvantages than advantages to be brought to the quality life of our social community.

30 Of course, during these years' high unemployment rate, introducing of such a large factory will consume unemployed workforce in some respects. A family may increase their income by taking account of its new employed father during or after the construction of the factory, local government can increase its tax income and retail dealers of our community may sell a little more because of the increasing of population that may be the result of the new build factory. However, all these
35 benefits may seem to be so small when compared with all those disadvantages the new build factory may lead to.

The most hateful thing is that you may not able to smell the fresh air in the sunny Sunday mornings because this huge industrial monster will probably deliver a great deal of waste fume and waste materials every day, far more than the amount you can imagine. And far more disappointed than this, those rumbling, non-stopping
40 stream lines in the factory can make noises loud enough to bereave people of our

thought alone is sufficient to allow me to make my decision.

Topic 185 A house or a business?

Nowadays the only thing people seem to be interested is earning more and more money. Many people spend their entire lives doing business and neglect their family and friends. I do not want to be one of them. If I have to choose between earning money and spending time with my family I would choose my family. Therefore, if I have to choose between buying a nice big house for my family and me and a business that would take up all my free time I would choose the house.

The business can make you a lot of money, however, it cannot make you happy. The house, on the other hand, can be a dream that have come true. It can be the best place in the world for you where you can feel safe, calm, and free. The place where you keep all the things that you love and more importantly where the people you love most live. It is also the place where you will spend the happiest moments in your life.

Another reason to choose to buy a house is that it gives you security. The business may fail, but the house will always remain yours. You know that no matter what happens you will always have a place to live. And if you cannot earn enough money to make your living you may let off some of the rooms.

Last but not least, I believe that a house is more valuable heritage than a business. A house can always be sold for its real price while selling a business can be quite difficult and even impossible if it has not been profitable for the past few years.

All things considered, there is no doubt that buying a house is the best choice for me. But a house cannot make me happy if I live there alone. When I picture my dream house I always see my future children playing in it.

25

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30

"Always dream and shoot higher than you know how to. Don't bother just to be better than your contemporaries or predecessors. Try to be better than yourself."

-- William Faulkner (1897-1962), American writer, "The Sound and the Fury"



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