

**Qn4: “I felt really proud of my contribution to the team.” Write about a time that you felt like this.**

Ball in my hands, sweat dripping down my face and the taste of bitter and disgusting mud was in my mouth. Emotions were at an all-time high with everything to play for. It was a **hero or zero moment** where the victor would gain everything and the loser would lose everything, drowning in sadness and sorrow. The score was all **square at zero-zero** during the highly anticipated cup final between Oldham rugby club and Saints rugby club. Everyone was exhausted and had put everything on the line for their respective club. It was a true test of character and resilience to see who would blink first and make a mistake in this **neck and neck battle**. Each team had played their strongest team but there was nothing to separate the two teams.

An **intense blockbuster** thirty minutes of the first half had ended. **Demolishing tackles, humongous efforts** to score and **colossal runs** at each other were nowhere near enough to break Oldham's **impenetrable defensive line**. My teammates and I were dumbfounded with how technical and skilled they were. It was going to take **a bus charging at full speed** to penetrate that defensive line. We were all drained and had **nothing left in the tank** and did not know whether we could keep up that high pace for much longer. We turned to our **bright light in the darkness** to see whether we had a knight in shining armour: Coach Marcus. However, to our surprise, he was at a loss for words and did not know how to respond to the **battle** he had witnessed. Just like that, our bright light to guide us to victory had vanished and the **darkness of tiredness and aching of our body** had overwhelmed us and consumed us.

The second half was like night and day from our first-half performance. We had been over-run by Oldham's constant and relentless pressure. The first 10 minutes of the second half was a **massacre**. Three tries had been conceded with all of them converted. It was now looking like a **landslide victory** for Oldham and an embarrassing defeat for Saints. Some of our supporters had **lost all hope** and could no longer bear the **humiliation of the one-sided contest** so they had begun to leave with a look of disgust on their faces while Oldham's supporters were as happy as can be cheering, singing and even **taunting** members of the Saints family. This image in my head kept on replaying and sparked a fire in me brighter than ever.

During moments like this one shall rise and one shall fall. I suddenly had many flashbacks of all the tough times I had in preparing for this final. All the **blood, sweat and tears** put into our journey to reach this final would have been wasted and for nothing if this was our fate to lose embarrassing fashion. The perfect opportunity had presented itself for me to make a change and be the difference. I spoke my heart out and held onto every small bit of hope for victory left. The eyes of my teammates had lit up and a **hunger for victory was reborn**. We played with our hearts out, leaving everything we had left on the field and was like a well-oiled, try-scoring machine tying up the score back to all squares in just 10 minutes. With time running out, it was a make-it-or-break-it situation to complete our valiant effort. **“One last push and the title was ours!”** Coach Marcus roared. The try was a metre away from me and by instinct, I picked up the ball and scored. The crowd went wild and we broke down in tears of ecstasy.

Looking back at that **momentous event from last May**, I am very proud of my contribution to the team because it was one of the hardest things I have done in my life.

(648 words – longer than the 500 recommended)

Written by: Darrian Shaedon Edited by: LSF

**Commented [LSF1]:** Good description using list of three

**Commented [LSF2]:** Use of **apt vocab** to describe the context

**Commented [LSF3]:** Good use of noun phrases

**Commented [LSF4]:** Metaphor

**Commented [LSF5]:** Following up on bus metaphor

**Commented [LSF6]:** Use of contrast

**Commented [LSF7]:** Hyperbole

**Commented [LSF8]:** Effective use of personification and hyperbole

**Commented [LSF9]:** Apt vocab to describe the despondency of situation

**Commented [LSF10]:** List of three

**Commented [LSF11]:** Personification

**Commented [LSF12]:** Show not tell: to show how the dejected coach also came back to life

**Commented [LSF13]:** Need to give an indication of the time it happened

### Qn 5: "Teenagers are completely dependent on technology." What is your opinion?

Envision a world where all technology ceases to exist. How would you live? How would you do your work? For teenagers whose life has been filled with technology since the moment they were born, it would be catastrophic. It is no surprise that adults believe that teenagers are completely dependent on technology. To me, teenagers are mindless drones who are enslaved by their mobile phones. Almost every aspect of our lives – save for one or two -- is centred around technology.

Firstly, students are dependent on technology in their studies. Gone are the days where students used notebooks to pen down their notes. Nowadays, many students write and store their notes online, relying solely on their mobile phone or iPad to produce their precious notes. Using a device instead of paper provides a plethora of benefits, from being able to save them onto cloud storage to being able to share them easily with classmates. Additionally, students are very dependent on the Internet for solutions to questions. With Google having the answers to every question a student can think about in a few clicks, it can be hard to resist the urge to refer to it. Unfortunately, many students are relying solely on search engines to generate their answers for them. Some are even taking it as far as plagiarising online information in writing their essays entirely, contributing nothing creatively themselves.

Secondly, technology has become the main source of teenagers' entertainment. The current trend is online gaming. Many started at a young age due to its easy availability via the portable devices that their caregivers freely gave them to pass their time. This passion for gaming has crept its way into the lives of many teenagers, becoming part of their daily routine. Be it as a portal to escape from their 'dreadful' reality or a prime source of dopamine and adrenaline, most teenagers will pick online gaming over any other activity in a heartbeat. They use games to relax, hang out with friends, distract themselves or try new things. It has become such an integral part of their lives that they would be completely lost without it.

Furthermore, applications such as TikTok or Instagram have invaded the lives of teenagers. It is a common sight to see teenagers with their heads buried deep into phones, totally oblivious to the outside world, interested only in the new fad on social media. Sadly, technology has become a drug that satisfies teenagers' lust for pleasure and escape.

Luckily, some teenagers can still live without technology. Basketball courts in the neighbourhood are usually occupied by secondary school students taking a well-deserved break after a hectic day at school. Spending hours on the court, they do not rely much on technology to work out some sweat. It is also quite common to see groups of teenagers spending their day at shopping centres, walking around, and laughing with their friends. It is heartening to note teenagers know the importance of enjoying the simplicities of life sans technology. They know that their deepest memories will be formed from time spent physically with their friends, not on virtually on their phones.

In conclusion, I think that teenagers are just heavily dependent on technology, as there are times where they can live without it. Whether this dependency on technology is a bone or bane for society is beyond the scope of this essay. I do hope that teenagers will still put down their phones to enjoy some fun outdoors once in a while.

(582 words – longer than the 500 recommended)

Written by: Akmal Reyza

Edited by: LSF

**Commented [LSF14]:** Use of 'you' here is acceptable as it clearly shows writer is aware the reader is an adult grading his work. This is then followed up with a discussion on teenagers – with whom the writer associates with.

**Commented [LSF15]:** A good way to say how teenagers are very dependent on their phones

**Commented [LSF16]:** Clear topic sentence

**Commented [LSF17]:** Synonym for 'completely dependent'

**Commented [LSF18]:** Topic sentence expressed rather differently from the first one – no monotony

**Commented [LSF19]:** Elaborating on the extent of dependency on tech

**Commented [LSF20]:** Can actually do away with this section to trim off 57 words

**Commented [LSF21]:** Good use of sentence variety.

**Commented [LSF22]:** Linking statement to answer the question that teenagers are not completely dependent on tech

**Commented [LSF23]:** Writer has clear understanding of the purpose and scope of discussion for the question.

**Q6: “If you are positive, you’ll see opportunities instead of obstacles.” How far would you agree?**

‘Mario Kart’ is a video game in which players race against each other as fictional characters. If you play the game, it is all fun and games until you are leading your last lap and your heart is beating out of your chest in anxious anticipation of the sweet taste of victory. Then, like a stab to the heart, your opponent throws an obstacle at you, causing you to fall to last place. Many players have been in this exact position before. It might seem like just a silly game. However, I believe that it is the perfect analysis for facing adversity in our lives. When it may seem like everything is falling into place and we are ahead, life hits us like a banana peel to slip us up. While it is easy to grumble and moan when we meet with challenges, I believe that with the right mindset, we will be able to turn those same hurdles into stepping stones towards success. Thus, with a positive mindset, we will look at difficulties as avenues for growth and be able to focus our energy on what is in our control.

Firstly, a growth mindset allows us to glean sage life lessons from the challenges we face. Adversity has the ability to do two things to people facing it: it can either make them crumble or raise them to greater heights. Similarly, there are two responses people can take towards an adversity: either escape from it or brave it and become stronger. This can be easily summed up by the fight or flight response that all animals make when met with danger. However, the salient difference for humans is that our challenges are rarely fatal. No matter how dire a situation could feel to us, it is important for us to remember that these obstacles can only break us if we let them. If we are armed with a growth mindset, we will view them as learning opportunities instead. Through the lens of a positive mindset, our perception of challenges changes and we start to view them as means for further development. With this optimism, we will be able to embrace such difficulties instead of fearing them. After all, as the saying goes: “What doesn’t kill us makes us stronger!”

Secondly, a positive mindset allows us to focus our energy on what is in our control. The challenges that life has in store for us are inevitable. Despite all our best efforts, we will never be able to stop them from happening. However, an optimistic outlook will help us to relinquish control and responsibility over those hurdles and instead focus on what we can do to overcome them. This will allow us to have a greater sense of self-assuredness, enabling us to valiantly press on in the face of adversity. The wise words of the serenity prayer come to mind: “Give me the peace to accept things I cannot change, strength to change the things I cannot accept, and the wisdom to know the difference.” Likewise, when we learn to harness our energy towards facing any challenges instead of worrying about them, we will look at them merely as steps towards our goals.

However, it is foolish to think that no challenge can get us down. In reality, even if we have a positive attitude, we can still feel despondent after facing a fair-share of obstacles. It is completely natural for us to feel hopeless and even desperate at times as life has a funny way of exceeding our own expectations for what we can bear. However, if we have a positive mindset towards life, we will slowly but surely overcome these feelings of self-doubt and anxiety. There will not be moments that set us back, but instead opportunities to assess how we can propel ourselves even further when we thought possible before. This life is a turbulent sea of heartbreak, disappointment and anxiety. If we have a pessimistic attitude

**Commented [LSF24]:** Need this to qualify the use of ‘you’ as writer cannot assume the reader is a gamer

**Commented [LSF25]:** Dramatic use of language for effect

**Commented [LSF26]:** Can remove the ‘I’ here as there are far too many personal pronouns used in a paragraph

**Commented [LSF27]:** Elegant way of saying you agree to a larger extent.

**Commented [LSF28]:** Sentence variety for effect

**Commented [LSF29]:** Use of symbol / metaphor

**Commented [LSF30]:** Apt vocab

**Commented [LSF31]:** Clear signpost to show opposing view being considered – it’s an argumentative essay after all

**Commented [LSF32]:** Metaphor

**Commented [LSF33]:** List of three

towards all our challenges, we will drown. In contrast, a positive attitude can be a lifeboat that saves us from getting lost at sea.

In conclusion, life is truly nothing but a long, drawn-out game of 'Mario Kart'. Sometimes we feel as though we are on top of the world, and nothing can take us down; other times, we feel like there is no chance of us winning and failure is inevitable. If we are armed with the fuel that is a positive mindset, we will be able to keep cruising on, despite the hurdles that are sent our way.

(760 words – much longer than the 500 recommended)

*Written by: Shridhar Raj Edited by: LSF*

**Commented [LSF34]:** Good way to link back to Hook in the introduction

**Commented [LSF35]:** Use of complex punctuation to show grammatical range

**Commented [LSF36]:** Symbol / metaphor