MIGHTY OAK
TEST PREP

Practice ACT Essay
Number SIX

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Individuality and Conformity

History and literature are filled with stories of rugged individuals who become heroes by going their own way and ignoring the popular behavior, beliefs, and actions of their peers. On the other hand, we all live in a society where, as members of a community, we are expected to behave (and are rewarded for behaving) like the other members of the community. Is it more important to follow your own beliefs or those of society?

Read and carefully consider these perspectives. Each suggests a particular way of thinking about the notions of individuality and conformity.

Perspective One

Whether it's on a sports team, in a classroom, or at a workplace, acting like our peers is the best way to ensure the group operates smoothly. If we were to all act by our own set of rules, teams, workplaces, and classrooms would cease to function properly.

Perspective Two

If individual members of society never thought differently, dressed differently, or acted differently, society would have no chance to progress. Most of our great breakthroughs have been achieved by people who were not afraid to be different from the crowd.

Perspective Three

Individuality is like salt -- a small amount adds flavor to our lives, but too much ruins the whole dish. There is no problem with going against the crowd, assuming the defiant act is modest in scope and does not harm or damage others.

Essay Task

Write a coherent, unified essay in which you evaluate multiple perspectives given on the subject of individuality and conformity. In your essay, be sure to:

--analyze and evaluate the perspectives given
--state and develop your own perspective on the issue
--explain the relationship between your perspective and those given

Your perspective may be in full agreement with any of the others, in partial agreement, or wholly different. Whatever the case, support your ideas with logical reasoning and detailed, persuasive examples.

Plan Your Essay Here

Writing on this page will not be used to determine your score
(but don't be tempted to just go to the next page and start writing – planning is crucial!)

Use the space below to plan your essay and come up with ideas. Here are some things to think about:

Consider the strengths and weaknesses of the three provided perspectives
–do they make useful points? What are they forgetting to think about?
–why might they be convincing or unconvincing to other people?

Personal experiences, beliefs, and knowledge
–what is your personal position on this topic? What are the strong and weak points of your position?
–how will you compellingly argue for this position in your essay?

Yes, the first page of the essay really is shorter than the rest. On the real test, this space will have slots where you fill in your test booklet and writing test form numbers. This first page is seven lines shorter than the next three.

Start the WRITING TEST here.

If you are not done, please continue on the next page.

WRITING TEST

If you are not done, please continue on the next page.

WRITING TEST

If you are not done, please continue on the next page.

WRITING TEST

STOP the Writing Test.