Outliers Synthesis Essay

Student Sample #1

Throughout life, success directly correlates with the surrounding society. This society, as well as its restrictions, can be the sole reason for a person’s trek towards success.

The society into which a person is placed drastically influences person’s attainment of success. This society can motivate a person to succeed and construct an environment that can form them for achievement. In *Outliers,* Gladwell demonstrates this in the study of the community of Roseto, proving that “the people we surround ourselves with have a profound effect on who we are.” (11) The society interacted so positively with each other that the people lived healthy lives, therefore increasing their chances for success. If the village had been a place of discontentment and bitterness, the people would have been less healthy—both emotionally and physically—and less likely to achieve success in their futures. Another occurrence is in *Modern Family*. Manny’s achievement was motivated by his mother’s energizing focus on his previous successes. His stepfather’s pride in making t-shirts for the family boosted Manny’s confidence and helped him to fight for success. Without this positive atmosphere, Manny’s confidence would have been minute and his chances for success would be slimmer. The same is in the classrooms of the children of this country. In “Most Likely to Succeed,” also by Gladwell, one of the problems stated with our education system is the lack of attention given to a student by a teacher while within the classroom. In order to have a better student “effective teachers [must] have a gift for noticing…” (1) When a student—no matter the subject of which he is learning—is given efficient attention, his learning increases, leading him to a greater success rate. The amount of attention a student receives is dependent on the society in which a child is placed. This need for attention can only be met if the student is in a society that is supportive and striving towards achievement.

Just as positive environments can influence a person’s achievement, negativity has a vast influence on a person’s achievement of success. Just as an encouraging society can influence a person for the better, negativity has just as much as power to sway a person’s attainment of success. In *Savage Inequalities,* a limiting society is the basis of the article. The children of East St. Louis, Illinois experience a life in “‘the most distressed small city in America,’” (Kozol, 7), a city that “[has] no natural way…[to] bring itself out of this situation.” (24) Because of these problems, limitations are set: ‘“Gifted children…are everywhere in East St. Louis, but their gifts are lost to poverty and turmoil and the damage done by knowing they are written off by their society.’” (34) The city cannot afford to pay teachers and the schools are falling apart, leaving the children without much of a future. Because their city is society is limited and narrow-minded, they have no hope of completing the required education to leave the city, causing a vicious cycle. Another occurrence of negativity from the social construct is also in *Modern Family.* Mitchell and Claire had a past of insecurity because their father never encouraged them in their ice skating career. As they became adults, the insecurity was brought to the surface again, limiting them in their ability to mature and move on from petty arguments. This leads to an inability to move forward and achieve success. This great influence of society is also proven in the article “Should American Education Be Super Sized,” in which Gary Stager states: “The quality of education…should more properly be seen as the enlightening experiences…[as well as the] socializing a student goes through in the process of interacting with interested peers and creative, knowledgeable teachers.” (20) Although formal education within a classroom is absolutely vital, the social interaction and influence that a student participates in is priceless.

Every person is extremely influenced by the society that surrounds them. This society can be encouraging—leading to the greatest chance for success—or limiting. Therefore, a person’s success rate directly correlates with their social construct.0020