

English 101

“School-to-Work”: Pro or Con?

The two short essays we’ve read are position statements on the issue of “school-to-work,” an educational strategy that places jobs and the skills needed to excel in the workplace at the center of a high school curriculum. The argument in favor of such a curriculum is that the lessons learned in math, science, and the humanities should be practically applied and related to the realities and needs of the workplace. On the other hand, critics of school-to-work argue that such an approach robs students of the chance to learn and devalues education, equating it to job-training and narrowing the focus of instruction only to the skills necessary for people to be productive workers.

Now that you’ve read and discussed a couple of positions on this issue, write a short essay on one of the following topics:

Looking back on your high school experience, which model do you think better describes your own education, a “school-to-work” approach designed to prepare you for the workplace, or a more traditional approach designed to prepare you for college or some other pursuit? In your essay, give specific examples of classes or programs available to students to explain and support your assessment of your school’s approach.

OR

Which of these approaches to curriculum design do you think is more advantageous or appropriate for students? In your essay, tell specifically why you think one of the two curricular emphases would be more beneficial to students than the other.