

Essay Topic 3

The planet's future is at risk. The water and air have both suffered at the hand of human kind. While much has been done to alleviate the pollution visible to the eye, much remains to be done to eliminate contaminants, seen and unseen. Now is the chance for people to make a change, to care for the only planet known to sustain life. To do this, people must educate the future generations on why it is necessary to forego extravagances in favor of saving the only home humans have. Nevertheless, to relieve some tension, know that the first step has already been made. Society has raised teens just like me, who care about Earth as if it were our own, which it is.

Living near White Deer, Texas, I am surrounded by inspiration to help the earth. Since I was about five years old, windmills have been a key part of the landscape, as I live just north of town where the original 80 windmills were built. This past fall, new windmills were placed in the pastures in front of our house, giving my family a 360-degree view of clean energy in action. As well as creating a beautiful scene for sunsets, the windmills give hope that someday, cities would know the clean air that we enjoy here in our small town.

As well as having zero emissions, the windmills have had little effect on the abundant wildlife. On my morning route to school, the local herd of pronghorns can be seen crossing the road, as well many other species native to the area. Pheasant, quail, and other birds have continued to nest in the fields. Being a daily observer, it is easy to say that I have seen more harm come to the wildlife on the road than I have ever seen done by the windmills. The only reminder of their presence is the break in the skyline and the subtle whir of the blades through the air.

Seeing these windmills has proven to be a constant reminder of the ability of humankind to create clean energy. With the wind in an almost perpetual state of motion in our area, hence the original reason the windmills were placed here, it does not seem improbable that they provide a sustainable amount of energy. With their relatively low impact on the surrounding area, as well as the improvement to the local economy, the windmills are also able to provide power to about 25,000 households. This amount is significant, especially in the Texas Panhandle, where that could fuel several small communities.

However, it was not this positive change alone that persuaded me to take the care of our planet more seriously. My father has worked for a chemical refinery for many years, and the smell of mercaptans has always left its trace on his work clothes. Used to add odor to gases, mercaptans allow people to be able to detect the poisonous gases in the air. To me, the scent was a reminder of the invisible emissions given off every day, slowly sickening our planet.

While many steps have been made to improve the conditions of chemical plants over the years, it is my hope that someday we will reach a point in technology that allows us to operate our world completely emission free. Through advancement in technology, and education about the importance of keeping our atmosphere, as well as the biosphere, clean and healthy, I believe this goal can be reached, and I want to help move the process forward.

In my personal life, I strive to keep the world cleaner than I left it. I use energy-efficient appliances, as well as conserving energy daily by monitoring my usage of said appliances. My car is a fuel-efficient Honda, which not only saves me money at the gas pump, but also allows to me feel significantly better about my personal eco-footprint. I also make an effort not to use plastic bags when I go shopping, and when they are the only option available, I recycle them. My

most important conservation effort, though is in water conservation. Plants in my garden require little water, and I try to conserve water when doing laundry and showering.

Even though my efforts may seem insignificant alone, the little things add up. If everyone made these small changes in their daily life, it is proven that it would make a huge difference. That is why I have faith that someday, clean energy will become the dominant source of power for the world. The beautiful setting of nature and humankind will coexist as peacefully as it has in my front yard.