

WORKOUT #4

EXERCISE

Read the following and answer the questions.

The Elixir of Life

Imagine: Your child asks for a drink of water. You grab a glass; you turn on the tap; and, fill the glass to full. Your child takes a drink and smiles. He/she says, "Thank you" then runs off to play. You would never suspect that in the act of pouring water you were actually killing your child. In a real sense, you could be.

Water is a significant and plentiful compound on the earth. Two hydrogen molecules with a single oxygen molecule form the clear, life-giving elixir. Yet, the ability to keep this compound free of pollutants and clear is becoming a developing concern in many parts of the world. Needless to say, water is slowly becoming the life-taking elixir. Many different types of pollutants are affecting the quality of water.

Typically, water contains many natural additives, when coming from a spring or other extension of an underground aquifer. However, water, which you drink, often contains pollutants from cesspit leakage, septic tank leakage, or industrial site drainage. Such forms of waste work their way through the ground, sometimes following natural run-off points, into our aquifers. These aquifers, which supply sometimes up to 100% of our drinking water, are quickly affected ("Water").

In Houghton, Michigan, a recent Wal-Mart construction site allowed industrial pollutants to drain from the site to a stream which ended in a nearby public park and subsequently into a fresh-water lake and reservoir. Biologists from a local college assessed the water and discovered large amounts of Mercury, Lead, Iron, and Sulfur in the water. The local residents, while surprised at the findings, immediately demanded a clean up. Wal-Mart reciprocated and began a full-scale clean up under the cover of darkness. No further news stories were released and any liability by the Wal-Mart company was kept in closed court records, inaccessible by the general public (Davison).

Perhaps the industrial pollutants introduced into the groundwater and subsequent streams were purely accidental. Wal-Mart, minus a track record of human rights violations in Asia, seems to be a fairly reputable company. Or, perhaps the local residents were to blame for not having clear legislation which protected their civic environments by large merchants. Regardless, the damage was done. Children were sick; the town was affected; and, Wal-Mart suffered little, since the merchant continues to operate in the little town of ten thousand people.

The World Health Organization estimates that millions could be saved from the effects of polluted water (WHO). Yet, without proper treatment and stewardship of the environment, many people will fall pray to the effects of water pollution. The best thing to do is to be thoughtful about the products you wash down your drain. Be thoughtful and active in affecting legislation to preserve our green spaces and aquifers. And, do not endorse any companies/merchants which have shown tendencies towards dumping industrial pollutants into the ground. With your help, we can keep our water potable and pure.

Works Cited

Davison, Suzy. Personal Interview. October 20, 2008.

"Water." Encarta. October 31, 2008. Microsoft Corporation.
<http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761573158_2/Water.html>

World Health Organization. "How Does Safe Water Impact Global Health." 25 June 2008. World Health Organization Online. October 31, 2008. <<http://www.who.int/features/qa/70/en/>>

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the thesis of this text?
2. What are the two major points presented in support of this text?
3. What types of support are used? Sources?
4. How does the counterargument work in this text?
5. What strategy is used in the introduction?
6. What strategy is used in the conclusion?

Additional Questions for Discussion

7. Where/how does the author use pathos?
8. Where/how does the author use logos?
9. Is there a short fallacy in the counterargument? If so, what kind of fallacy is it?
10. Do the sources used in the Works Cited Seem appropriate and reputable? Why or why not?