Quarter 4 Week 1 Assignment Sheet
Writing 8
Ms. Sandlin

Middle School Writing

4/8/24

Instructions: **After completing/working on each day's assignment include a parent initial signature below.**

Day One/Wednesday:

- Complete the argument II handout. Write your opinion on the assigned topic, come up with three reasons for your opinion. Leave the evidence summary, source, and URL spaces blank to answer tomorrow.
- Conduct online research. Select three sources that provide evidence for your point of view. You will need to save the links to your sources to create a Works Cited for them later in the term. Read through your chosen three sources.

Parent Initial: ____________

Day Two/Thursday:

- Write down a summary of the information found in each of your evidence sources. 2) Write down the website URL, if a website was used. 3) Describe what kind of source was used (firsthand experience, current events, historical event and where published, expert and where published, study and where published, etc.)
- Locate an additional source that relates to your topic. Evaluate if it is a better source than the original selections (Remember to look for some primary and some secondary sources).

Parent Initial: ____________

Day Three/Friday:

- Read the evidence packet.
- Complete the source cards handout on information on firsthand and secondhand evidence from the packet.

Parent Initial: ____________

Day Four/Monday:

- Read the provided argument. Highlight the main idea/thesis in the argument in one color.
- Highlight a minimum of three reasons presented in the article that support the author's opinion/thesis. (Use a different color highlighter than the main idea.)
- Using a third color, highlight evidence that the author provided for each reason for their thesis. (Example: **Thesis:** Students learn better working independently. **1)** They learn better working

independently because they avoid distractions. **2)** They learn better independently because they are forced to do more research/be more independent. **3)** Students learn better individually because they are able to activate more creativity that could be stifled in a group. [Highlight pieces of evidence referenced for each reason in the article.])

- Complete adverbs Developing Writing Skills exercise.
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Parent Initial: ___________

The weekly schedule has been broken down to maximize parent and student success. Parents: please oversee that student work is at individual/grade-level standard. Please sign below after checking students' daily work.

I have looked over each day's assigned work and verify its quality and completion.

Parent signature: ________________________________ Date: ____________________

Questions? Contact Ms. Sandlin
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(509) 379-6846

Name: ______________________________

Create Your Argument Two

Instructions: 1) Select your final persuasive topic. **2)** Create a thesis (your main idea/opinion/stance) for one of the topics below. **3)** Come up with three reasons that you hold your opinion on the topic. **4)** Include a minimum of three pieces of evidence (one per reason). **5)** Write down what kind of source (expert article, firsthand experience, historical information and where it was found, current events information, expert and location expert's information is published, and/or a study or survey and the location where the information was found.

Sample Arguments:

-Mandatory pet-owner training	-Recycling	-Social media use
-Colonialism	-Effects of Fertilizer	-Corruption in U.S.
-Electric vehicles	-Zoos	-Aliens

Selected Argument Topic: ______________________________

Thesis:

-Reason One for Stance:

Evidence 1 Summary:

Name: ______________________________

Source: ____

Author:

URL ending: (.com, .org, etc.)

Remember to save links to your sources on your own email or documen

-Reason Two for Stance:

Evidence 2 Summary:

Source: ____

Author:

URL ending:

-Reason Three for Stance:

Evidence 3 Summary:

Name: ______________________

Source: ______________________

Author:

URL ending:

Presenting Evidence

Once a writer has established a claim and developed a thesis statement, the next step is to support it with effective evidence. What evidence to present, how much is necessary, and how to present it are all rhetorical choices guided by an understanding of the audience. A person speaking to a group of scientists will more likely need facts and figures to persuade her audience, while one writing an essay for a local newspaper might want to use an anecdote to grab the audience's attention. Amy Domini, knowing that her audience — the generally affluent and liberal readers of *Ode* magazine — will include many who are hostile to fast food, presents evidence regarding the positive changes that fast-food companies are making, as well as numerical evidence showing that fast food is a growing phenomenon that could have either a positive or a negative impact on health and the environment. Keep audience in mind throughout this discussion of evidence, particularly in terms of whether your audience would be persuaded more by formal or informal sources.

Story

Relevant, Accurate, and Sufficient Evidence

Regardless of the type of evidence a writer chooses to use, it should always be relevant, accurate, and sufficient. Relevant evidence is evidence that specifically applies to the argument being made. To argue that a particular car is superior from a dependability standpoint, bringing in evidence about its maintenance record would be relevant, but talking about its hand-tooled leather seats would not. Generally, good writers do not leave the relevance of a piece of evidence to the reader's imagination; they explicitly spell out what the relationship is between an example and the argument at hand.

Presenting accurate information means taking care to quote sources correctly without misrepresenting what the sources are saying or taking the information out of context. One way to ensure that you have accurate evidence is to get it from a credible source. Think carefully about the bias any source might have. Is it partisan or backed financially by a company or industry group? These concerns may be especially crucial when using sources from the Internet. Even statistical data can be inaccurate if it is from a source that has gathered the data in a way that fits its own agenda. Accuracy can also be a matter of the audience's perception. You should choose sources that they will find credible. If you want accurate dependability information about a car, some reliable sources might include a reputable mechanic, a magazine reviewer who has compared the car's performance to other similar cars, or simply someone who has owned the car for a long time.

Finally, you should include a sufficient amount of evidence to support your thesis. If you based your entire argument about the car's dependability on an interview with a single mechanic, that would not be persuasive. A mechanic only sees the cars that break down, so perhaps his viewpoint is overly negative.

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First-Hand Evidence

First-hand evidence is something you *know*, whether it's from personal experience, anecdotes you've heard from others, observations, or your general knowledge of events.

Personal Experience

The most common type of first-hand evidence is personal experience. Bringing in personal experience adds a human element and can be an effective way to appeal to pathos. For example, when writing about whether you do or do not support single-sex classrooms, you might describe your experience as a student, or you might use your observations about your school or classmates to inform your argument. Personal experience is a great way to make an abstract issue more human, and it is an especially effective technique for both introducing and concluding an argument. Personal experience can interest readers and draw them in, but they'll need more than just your perspective to be persuaded.

Personal experience works best if the writer can speak as an insider. For instance, you can speak knowledgeably about the issue of single-sex classrooms because you have inside knowledge about classrooms and how they work. In the following essay about the environmentalist movement, Jennifer Oladipo argues that minorities need to become more involved: "The terms *environmentalist* and *minority* conjure two distinct images in most people's minds — a false dichotomy that seriously threatens any chance of pulling the planet out of its current ecological tailspin." As a member of a minority group herself, she uses her personal experience as both an entrance into the essay and a source of evidence.

Why Can't Environmentalism Be Colorblind?

JENNIFER OLADIPO

In nearly two years of volunteering and working at an urban nature preserve, I have never seen another face like mine come through our doors. At least, I've not seen another black woman come for a morning hike or native-wildlife program. The few I do encounter are teachers and chaperones with school groups, or aides assisting people with disabilities. When I commute by bus to the preserve, located in the middle of Louisville, Kentucky, I disembark with blacks and other minorities. Yet none of them ever seems to make it to the trails.

I might have assumed they simply weren't interested, but then I saw that none of the center's newsletters were mailed to predominantly minority areas of town, nor did any press releases go to popular minority radio stations or newspapers. Not ever, as far as I could tell. Although the nature center seeks a stronger community presence and feels the same budget pinch as other small nonprofits, it has missed large swaths of the community with its message.

The terms *environmentalist* and *minority* conjure two distinct images in most people's minds — a false dichotomy that seriously threatens any chance of pulling the planet out of its current ecological tailspin. Some people think this country is on the precipice of a societal shift that will make environmental stewardship an integral part of our collective moral code. But that is not going to happen as long as we as a nation continue to think and act as if "green" automatically means "white."

Assumptions about who is amenable to conservation values cost the environmental movement numbers and dollars. Religion, capitalism, and even militarism learned ages ago to reach actively across the racial spectrum. In terms of winning over

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minorities, they have left environmentalism in the dust. Not until I joined an environmental-journalism organization was my mailbox flooded with information about serious environmental issues — even though I have been volunteering in organic gardens, hiking, and camping for years. I had received solicitations for credit cards and political parties, fast-food coupons, and a few Books of Mormon — but I had to seek out environmental groups.

5 Minorities make up one-third of the population, and we are growing as an economic and financial force as our numbers increase. We are a key to maintaining the energy that environmentalism has gained as a result of intense mainstream attention. That momentum will peter out without more people to act on the present sense of urgency. Imagine the power of 100 million Asians, African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans invested in sustainable living, joining green organizations, voting for politicians and laws that protect the environment.

Nobody benefits from the perception that enjoying and caring for the environment is an exclusively white lifestyle. The truth is that brown, yellow, red, and black people like to go backpacking, too. Those of us with the means are buying organic, local, and hybrid. If environmentalism continues to appear mostly white and well-off, it will continue to be mostly white and well-off, even as racial and economic demographics change. The environmental movement will continue to overlook the nuances, found in diversity of experience, that reveal multiple facets of environmental problems — and their solutions.

Sooner or later, even global warming will be pushed off magazine covers, television screens, and the congressional floor. Before that time, we need to have in place something even more impressive: a racially diverse, numerically astounding mass of environmentalists ready to pick up the ball and run with it.

Oladipo writes most of her essay around her personal experience working in a Kentucky nature preserve, explaining why she chose the work and pointing out the lack of "another face like mine" in that setting. She describes her experiences of volunteering, of working at nature preserves and organic gardens, and also of joining an "environmental-journalism organization." Although she primarily draws on her own experiences in her essay, she also uses some statistics and a reasonable tone to make a persuasive case.

FALLACY ALERT **Hasty Generalization in First-Hand Evidence**

As we described previously (p. 91), a hasty generalization is a fallacy in which there is not enough evidence to support a particular conclusion. When using personal experience as evidence, it's important to remember that while it might provide some ethos to speak on a topic and it may be an effective way to appeal to pathos, personal experience is rarely universal proof.

EXAMPLE: Pulling wisdom teeth is just another unnecessary and painful medical procedure. I still have all of mine, and they haven't given me any problems.

Anecdotes

First-hand evidence also includes anecdotes about other people that you've either observed or been told about. Like personal experience, anecdotes can be a useful way to appeal to pathos.

In the following excerpt from an op-ed piece, Fabiola Santiago argues against the policy that children born in the United States to immigrants, including those who are undocumented, must be treated as nonresidents when it comes to receiving state services. To make the case about the specific unfairness of imposing out-of-state tuition on Florida residents who fall into this category, Santiago uses an anecdote as part of her evidence.

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from In College, These American Citizens Are Not Created Equal

FABIOLA SANTIAGO

> *"I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*
>
> —Lady Liberty

On Saturday, the day after its 125th anniversary celebration, the Statue of Liberty will close its doors for a year-long, $27 million renovation of the monument's interior. One could only hope that the nation's soul will undergo some transformation as well. Emma Lazarus, the descendant of Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain who wrote in 1883 "The New Colossus," the moving sonnet at the base of the statue in New York harbor, would shed mournful tears at the lack of compassion for immigrants these days. She would weep at the ease with which words of disdain are spoken by some who lead and aspire to lead, and at the underhanded way in which ill-willed actions are taken against immigrants and their children. Lady Liberty's "golden door" is not only jammed, slammed shut, or slightly ajar depending on where you come from, but we've fallen so low on the scale of our founding values that in the United States of America of today not all U.S. citizens are created equal. There are states like Florida, Alabama, and Arizona where politicians and bureaucrats use the system to discriminate, to create classes of Americans, to disenfranchise some of the most deserving among us. The latest low blow was unveiled by a class-action lawsuit and a bill filed in the Florida Legislature last week. Under rules established by the state's Department of Education and the university system's Board of Governors, students like Wendy Ruiz—born and raised in Miami—have to pay out-of-state tuition at rates that are more than three times what other Florida resident students pay for their education. Ruiz has lived in the state all her life. She has a Florida birth certificate, a Florida driver's license, and is registered to vote in Florida. But while other Miami Dade College students pay about $1,266 per term in tuition, she must pay $4,524 because the state considers her a dependent of nonresidents. Here's an institution that is supposed to defend education punishing a young American for the sins of her parents, who are undocumented immigrants. But we should all aspire to have neighbors like the Ruizes, who raised a daughter like Wendy, willing to work three part-time jobs to pay her tuition while maintaining a 3.7 grade-point average. "I know that I will be successful because I have never wanted something so bad in my life like I want this," Ruiz said of her education. Who knows what more Wendy Ruiz might accomplish, what more she could become if she were able to pay all of her attention to her education without the unfair financial burden of paying extravagantly unfair fees.

Santiago could have provided facts and figures about the legislative policy in question. Instead, she focuses on one person, Wendy Ruiz. Santiago points out that Ruiz "has lived in the state all her life. She has a Florida birth certificate, a Florida driver's license, and is registered to vote in Florida." Santiago then explains the difference in tuition for residents versus nonresidents, noting that Wendy is a model citizen "willing to work three part-time jobs to pay her tuition." She even quotes Wendy's comments

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about the premium she places on education. In this example, Santiago is not writing about herself, but she is telling an anecdote about another person that gives a human face to the argument. She appeals to pathos by describing the situation of Wendy Ruiz, being careful to point out that her situation typifies that of others who would suffer from a proposed policy.

Current Events

Current events are another type of evidence that is accessed first-hand through observation. Staying abreast of what is happening locally, nationally, and globally ensures a store of information that can be used as evidence in arguments. Remember that current events can be interpreted in many ways, so seek out multiple perspectives and be on the lookout for bias. Here is an example from a newspaper article by Fordham University professor Charles Camosy about the 2016 U.S. presidential election results. In this excerpt, he is writing in response to what he considers mistaken explanations in the media regarding Donald Trump's success with American voters.

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from Trump Won Because College-Educated Americans Are Out of Touch

CHARLES CAMOSY

As the reality of President-elect Donald Trump settled in very early Wednesday morning, MSNBC's Chris Hayes summed up an explanation common to many on the left: The Republican nominee pulled ahead thanks to old-fashioned American racism.

But the attempt to make Trump's victory about racism appears to be at odds with what actually happened on Election Day. Consider the following facts.

Twenty-nine percent of Latinos voted for Trump, per exit polls. Remarkably, despite the near-ubiquitous narrative that Trump would have deep problems with this demographic given his comments and position on immigration, this was a higher percentage of those who voted for GOP nominee Mitt Romney in 2012. Meanwhile, African Americans did not turn out to vote against Trump. In fact, Trump received a higher percentage of African American votes than Romney did.

And while many white voters deeply disliked Trump, they disliked Democrat Hillary Clinton even more. Of those who had negative feelings about both Trump and Clinton, Trump got their votes by a margin of 2 to 1. Votes for Trump seemed to signal a rejection of the norms and values for which Clinton stood more than an outright embrace of Trump. He was viewed unfavorably, for instance, by 61 percent of Wisconsinites, but 1 in 5 in that group voted for him anyway.

The most important divide in this election was not between whites and non-whites. It was between those who are often referred to as "educated" voters and those who are described as "working class" voters. 5

The reality is that six in 10 Americans do not have a college degree, and they elected Donald Trump. College-educated people didn't just fail to see this coming — they have struggled to display even a rudimentary understanding of the worldviews of those who voted for Trump. This is an indictment of the monolithic, insulated political culture in the vast majority our colleges and universities.

As a college professor, I know that there are many ways in which college graduates simply know more about the world than those who do not have such degrees. This is especially true — with some exceptions, of course — when it comes to "hard facts" learned in science, history and sociology courses.

But I also know that that those with college degrees — again, with some significant exceptions — don't necessarily know philosophy or theology. And they have especially paltry knowledge about the foundational role that different philosophical or theological claims play in public thought compared with what is common to college campuses. In my experience, many professors and college students don't even realize that their views on political issues rely on a particular philosophical or theological stance.

Second-Hand Evidence

Second-hand evidence is evidence that is accessed through research, reading, and investigation. It includes factual and historical information, expert opinion, and quantitative data. Anytime you cite what someone else knows, not what you know, you are using second-hand evidence. Although citing second-hand evidence may occasionally appeal to pathos and certainly may establish a writer's ethos, the central appeal is to logos — reason and logic.

Historical Information

A common type of second-hand evidence is historical information — verifiable facts that a writer knows from research. This kind of evidence can provide background and context to current debates; it also can help establish the writer's ethos because it shows that he or she has taken the time and effort to research the matter and become informed. One possible pitfall is that historical events are complicated. You'll want to keep your description of the events brief, but be sure not to misrepresent the events. In the following paragraph from *Hate Speech: The History of an American Controversy* (1994), author Samuel Walker provides historical information to establish the "intolerance" of the 1920s era.

> The 1920s are remembered as a decade of intolerance. Bigotry was as much a symbol of the period as Prohibition, flappers, the stock market boom, and Calvin Coolidge. It was the only time when the Ku Klux Klan paraded en masse through the nation's capital. In 1921 Congress restricted immigration for the first time in American history, drastically reducing the influx of Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe, and the nation's leading universities adopted admission quotas to restrict the number of Jewish students. The Sacco and Vanzetti case, in which two Italian American anarchists were executed for robbery and murder in a highly questionable prosecution, has always been one of the symbols of the anti-immigrant tenor of the period.

To support the claim that the 1920s was a period characterized by bigotry, Walker cites a series of historical examples: the Ku Klux Klan, immigration laws, restriction targeting certain ethnicities, and a high-profile court case.

Historical information is often used to develop a point of comparison or contrast to a more contemporary situation. In the following paragraph from Charles Krauthammer's op-ed "The 9/11 'Overreaction'? Nonsense," the political commentator does exactly that by comparing the War on Terror to previous military campaigns in U.S. history.

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Source Cards Two: Summary and Quotes

Instructions: Summarize information about primary and secondary sources. **1)** Include a two or more sentence reflection on the information read. **2)** Include one quote per summary card.

Topic (See title on page): (or heading)

Summary:

Quote(s):

Topic (Review title on page):

Summary:

Quote(s):

Topic (Review title on page):

Summary:

Quote(s):

Name: ______________________

Topic (Review title on page): Summary: Quote(s):
Topic (Review title on page): Summary: Quote(s):

Name: ______________________________

Reflection: (What are your takeaways and opinions on the information? Include five or more sentences.)

3

WHEN COLLABORATION KILLS CREATIVITY

The Rise of the New Groupthink and the Power of Working Alone

> *I am a horse for single harness, not cut out for tandem or teamwork. . . . Full well do I know that in order to attain any definite goal, it is imperative that* one *person should do the thinking and commanding.*
>
> —ALBERT EINSTEIN

March 5, 1975. A cold and drizzly evening in Menlo Park, California. Thirty unprepossessing-looking engineers gather in the garage of an unemployed colleague named Gordon French. They call themselves the Homebrew Computer Club, and this is their first meeting. Their mission: to make computers accessible to regular people—no small task at a time when most computers are temperamental SUV-sized machines that only universities and corporations can afford.

The garage is drafty, but the engineers leave the doors open to the damp night air so people can wander inside. In walks an uncertain young man of twenty-four, a calculator designer for Hewlett-Packard. Serious and bespectacled, he has shoulder-length hair and a brown beard. He takes a chair and listens quietly as the others marvel over a new build-it-yourself computer called the Altair 8800, which recently made the cover of *Popular Electronics*. The Altair isn't a true personal computer; it's hard to use, and appeals only to the type of person who shows up at a garage on a rainy Wednesday night to talk about microchips. But it's an important first step.

The young man, whose name is Stephen Wozniak, is thrilled to hear of the Altair. He's been obsessed with electronics since the age of three. When he was eleven he came across a magazine article about the first computer, the ENIAC, or Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer, and ever since, his dream has been to build a machine so small and easy to use that you could keep it at home. And now, inside this garage, here is news that The Dream—he thinks of it with capital letters—might one day materialize.

As he'll later recall in his memoir, *iWoz*, where most of this story appears, Wozniak is also excited to be surrounded by kindred spirits. To the Homebrew crowd, computers are a tool for social justice, and he feels the same way. Not that he talks to anyone at this first meeting—he's way too shy for that. But that night he goes home and sketches his first design for a personal computer, with a keyboard and a screen just like the kind we use today. Three months later he builds a prototype of that machine. And ten months after that, he and Steve Jobs cofound Apple Computer.

Today Steve Wozniak is a revered figure in Silicon Valley—there's a street in San Jose, California, named Woz's Way—and is sometimes called the nerd soul of Apple. He has learned over time to open up and speak publicly, even appearing as a contestant on *Dancing with the Stars*, where he displayed an endearing mixture of stiffness and good cheer. I once saw Wozniak speak at a bookstore in New York City. A standing-room-only crowd showed up bearing their 1970s Apple operating manuals, in honor of all that he had done for them.

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But the credit is not Wozniak's alone; it also belongs to Homebrew. Wozniak identifies that first meeting as the beginning of the computer revolution and one of the most important nights of his life. So if you wanted to replicate the conditions that made Woz so productive, you might point

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to Homebrew, with its collection of like-minded souls. You might decide that Wozniak's achievement was a shining example of the collaborative approach to creativity. You might conclude that people who hope to be innovative should work in highly social workplaces.

And you might be wrong.

Consider what Wozniak did right after the meeting in Menlo Park. Did he huddle with fellow club members to work on computer design? No. (Although he did keep attending the meetings, every other Wednesday.) Did he seek out a big, open office space full of cheerful pandemonium in which ideas would cross-pollinate? No. When you read his account of his work process on that first PC, the most striking thing is that *he was always by himself*.

Wozniak did most of the work inside his cubicle at Hewlett-Packard. He'd arrive around 6:30 a.m. and, alone in the early morning, read engineering magazines, study chip manuals, and prepare designs in his head. After work, he'd go home, make a quick spaghetti or TV dinner, then drive back to the office and work late into the night. He describes this period of quiet midnights and solitary sunrises as "the biggest high ever." His efforts paid off on the night of June 29, 1975, at around 10:00 p.m., when Woz finished building a prototype of his machine. He hit a few keys on the keyboard—and letters appeared on the screen in front of him. It was the sort of breakthrough moment that most of us can only dream of. And he was alone when it happened.

Intentionally so. In his memoir, he offers this advice to kids who aspire to great creativity:

> Most inventors and engineers I've met are like me—they're shy and they live in their heads. They're almost like artists. In fact, the very best of them *are* artists. *And artists work best alone* where they can control an invention's design without a lot of other people designing it for marketing or some other committee. I don't believe anything really revolutionary has been invented by committee. If you're that rare engineer who's an inventor and also an artist, I'm going to give you some advice that might be hard to take. That advice is: *Work alone. You're going to be best able to design revolu-*

tionary products and features if you're working on your own. Not on a committee. Not on a team.

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From 1956 to 1962, an era best remembered for its ethos of stultifying conformity, the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research at the University of California, Berkeley, conducted a series of studies on the nature of creativity. The researchers sought to identify the most spectacularly creative people and then figure out what made them different from everybody else. They assembled a list of architects, mathematicians, scientists, engineers, and writers who had made major contributions to their fields, and invited them to Berkeley for a weekend of personality tests, problem-solving experiments, and probing questions.

Then the researchers did something similar with members of the same professions whose contributions were decidedly less groundbreaking.

One of the most interesting findings, echoed by later studies, was that the more creative people tended to be socially poised introverts. They were interpersonally skilled but "not of an especially sociable or participative temperament." They described themselves as independent and individualistic. As teens, many had been shy and solitary.

These findings don't mean that introverts are always more creative than extroverts, but they do suggest that in a group of people who have been extremely creative throughout their lifetimes, you're likely to find a lot of introverts. Why should this be true? Do quiet personalities come with some ineffable quality that fuels creativity? Perhaps, as we'll see in chapter 6.

But there's a less obvious yet surprisingly powerful explanation for introverts' creative advantage—an explanation that everyone can learn from: *introverts prefer to work independently, and solitude can be a catalyst to innovation.* As the influential psychologist Hans Eysenck once observed, introversion "concentrates the mind on the tasks in hand, and prevents the dissipation of energy on social and sexual matters unrelated to work." In other words, if you're in the backyard sitting under a tree while everyone else is clinking glasses on the patio, you're more likely to have an apple fall on your head. (Newton was one of the world's great introverts. William Wordsworth described him as "A mind forever / Voyaging through strange seas of Thought alone.")

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If this is true—if solitude is an important key to creativity—then we might all want to develop a taste for it. We'd want to teach our kids to work independently. We'd want to give employees plenty of privacy and autonomy. Yet increasingly we do just the opposite.

We like to believe that we live in a grand age of creative individualism. We look back at the midcentury era in which the Berkeley researchers conducted their creativity studies, and feel superior. Unlike the starched-shirted conformists of the 1950s, *we* hang posters of Einstein on our walls, his tongue stuck out iconoclastically. *We* consume indie music and films, and generate our own online content. *We* "think different" (even if we got the idea from Apple Computer's famous ad campaign).

But the way we organize many of our most important institutions—our schools and our workplaces—tells a very different story. It's the story of a contemporary phenomenon that I call the New Groupthink—a phenomenon that has the potential to stifle productivity at work and to deprive schoolchildren of the skills they'll need to achieve excellence in an increasingly competitive world.

The New Groupthink elevates teamwork above all else. It insists that creativity and intellectual achievement come from a gregarious place. It has many powerful advocates. "Innovation—the heart of the knowledge economy—is fundamentally social," writes the prominent journalist Malcolm Gladwell. "None of us is as smart as all of us," declares the organizational consultant Warren Bennis, in his book *Organizing Genius*, whose opening chapter heralds the rise of the "Great Group" and "The End of the Great Man." "Many jobs that we regard as the province of a single mind actually require a crowd," muses Clay Shirky