

**Problem-Solution
Argumentative
Research Essay: Introduction**

During the term, you will write a problem-solution research essay where you define one problem individuals face that is related to the American Dream and then provide one solution to this problem. A couple example problems are listed below (you do NOT have to choose one on the list, but any topics not on the list must be approved):

1. Minorities do not have equal access to the American Dream.
2. Upward mobility is hindered by structural economic forces.
3. The American Dream is a false hope because of student debt.
4. The American Dream: families need two salaries to survive.
5. Access to quality health care is a barrier to the American Dream.

You will locate evidence from print and electronic sources to help define the problem and support your solution. You will present what you have learned in a focused and effective composition that supports a clear and developed academic thesis in which you try to convince your readers that your solution is best. You will consider one other opposing solution and provide a refutation to this argument to help convince readers that your idea is best.

Your paper must:

- be 5-7 pages in length (not including title page or reference page).
 - include research from at least **four outside sources** to support your thesis. **At least three academic sources** must be used and **no more than one source can be from our reading packet**.
 - be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins.
 - be written in 12-point, Times New Roman or other readable font.
 - include **APA** in-text citations and an **APA** Reference Page to document sources.
- include APA title page, page numbers, and running title.

In your essay, you must:

- decide on the best solution to your problem (it must be supported by articles)
- **persuade** your reader of your solution with adequate and logical researched evidence
- introduce your sources.
- summarize/paraphrase main ideas from the sources
- summarize/paraphrase major supporting details from the sources
- include at least one quotation and two paraphrases from the sources
- **cite sources correctly**. (APA)
- analyze, evaluate, interpret, and discuss source ideas when paraphrasing or quoting.
- present and refute an opposing solution.
- use language effectively to communicate and support your ideas.

How does one seek common ground while reserving differences in different circumstances? For the last five hundred years, indigenous people faced many crushing blows. However, a large number of people who came from Europe moved to America, resulting in the diversification of the social system in America today. Descendants of Indians experienced trauma, which led to differences with other races, then lead to indigenous people wanting independence. Without unity, it is harder to deal with progress in this country. There is one best solution to this problem: visit indigenous peoples' cultures to learn to respect them.

Historical events have contributed to this problem. After the Civil War, US policy began to move towards cultural extinction. Indigenous people tried to use force to prevent the actions resulting from these new policies. These actions from both the US citizens and the indigenous people led to a historical legacy of unresolved trauma which resulted in ethnic divisions in today's pluralistic society (Weaver, 1998). According to Hilary N. Weaver (1998) when European immigrants came to North America, Native Americans lives were assimilated into a military boarding school model where they were prohibited to speak their local language or practice their traditions and spiritual heritage. This process led to almost complete racial extinction. These actions affected the cultural development of Native Americans and also led to distrust of US citizens and foreign immigrants. Additionally, these actions led those indigenous groups who were able to maintain their traditional spiritual and healing practices to not openly discuss these practices with outsiders for fear of exploitation and prejudice, because of the long history of persecution for their beliefs (Weaver, 1998). The actions of the past are still affecting

relationships today between the different races in the US, which is a major problem for society.

In order to solve this problem we need to have more interaction between the two groups of people. Non-indigenous individuals should visit with indigenous people to learn about their culture and traditions. Because many Native Americans have experienced the trauma of racial bias, they have social workers already who are used to help them address issues they might face. These social workers can facilitate community based rehabilitation programs where members from the indigenous groups can mingle and discuss their cultures with non-indigenous citizens. "This important work can be started even when the social worker is non-native, although Native American sponsored community-based interventions may be desirable as referrals or as the intervention of choice where available" (Weaver, 1998, p.3). This quote shows that either Native Americans or non-native individuals can start the community-sponsored events; it doesn't matter as long as there is interaction between the two groups.

After initiating these meetings, the social worker can explore the history of the relationship between the groups and present possible current issues that they might have with one another. This is an important way to fix the shortcomings of a pluralistic society. Furthermore, there should be time at the event to hear about the culture of the indigenous peoples' in order to foster understanding and respect between the groups. It is necessary to fully understand their culture, so as to remedy the issues between the groups and to help not destroy their culture or customs in the future. Schon (1987) feels that without open communication between races or different groups of people there can never be understanding and without understanding one group of individuals will always cause

problems for the other (whether intentionally, or unintentionally). This article shows that visiting with people from other groups and learning about each other is essential when trying to heal old wounds and move forward towards a better, more cohesive future.

The main goal from these meetings and visitations is that people learn to respect one another and our differences. Each country requires a social environment of mutual respect. It is best to get accurate information on Native American groups from the group itself. This fosters more personal human relationships, which can lead first to respect for an individual and then by extension respect for the individuals culture and traditions. Once a meeting occurs between the two groups individuals will be able to reflect on what they learned and how this challenges their preconceived notions of the group. This will help the individual develop their own self-reflection skills. Many authors emphasize this skill as being particularly important for cultural competence by stating that "to reflect on their own cultural background, to examine their prejudices and behavior, and the importance of analyzing the impact of these factors, [leads to better] ability to interact with others" (Schon, 1987, p.45). This quote shows that when individuals develop their abilities to self-reflect and when they challenge their own beliefs and ideas then they can better learn to respect and get along with individuals from another background. This is why the best solution to fixing the problem of Native American oppression is by have individuals from indigenous groups share their cultures with non-native individuals

However, as with all proposed solutions, there are arguments against its efficacy. Many people believe that it is impossible that one approach implemented throughout the country would be widely successful. One critic argues "the right approach in one cultural context may well be the wrong approach in a different cultural context. Multiculturalism

is more than an emphasis on techniques; the focus must always be on competence in an effective therapeutic relationship, which will be assessed differently in each cultural context" (Pederson, 1996, p.2). This quote makes note that different cultures react to the same situation in many different manners; therefore, one approach given throughout a country as large as the US is not feasible and will not be successful. Since the US has so many different indigenous populations and, additionally, the cultures of non-natives also varies from state to state, it is hard to say that the community-based interactions and visitations would be successful throughout the country and lead to the problems between the groups being ameliorated.

While opponents of this solution do have a valid point, it is impossible to say with certainty that this solution would meet with success everywhere it is implemented, it is still the best solution to this problem for many reasons: it is cost-effective, easily implemented in any city or town, and it's a good starting point for further actions. First, it is an inexpensive solution for the country to implement. The group gathering can be free for the community and can be held at any community center, school meeting room, library, or park (weather permitting). Since the groups are just sharing their cultures with each other there is no need for any fancy place or technology, and food wouldn't be required either. The only possible expense may be renting a room or paying for the social worker to be present. These gatherings are easy to arrange in any city where both groups are present. Since no special technology or venue is required all you need is the interest of the people and they will do all the rest. Finally, even if these gathering do not fix all the racial tension between Native Americans and non-native citizens, it is still a good starting point to get everyone talking and working towards a better future. If we do

nothing then the problem stays the same and no one benefits. This solution is easy to implement and is the best place to start to foster a better relationship between the groups.

In conclusion, right now America has a major problem because Native Americans and non-native citizens are not living together in harmony. The history between these two groups is rife with tension and the effects of past actions can still be seen in society today. In order to prevent divisions in our society, we need to understand all cultures living here and respect them. All people should be able to develop a common ground together. In order to do this, the best solution is to implement meetings and visitations between these two groups throughout the country. The only way to change our long-held beliefs, prejudices, and ideas is to talk together and develop our abilities at self-reflection. The responsibility to bring these groups of people together does not lie with just one person, or even one group of people, it is the responsibility of everyone in the country to come together, to work together, and to create a unified, diverse nation.

References

- Pederson, P.(1996). The importance of both similarities and differences in multicultural counseling: Reaction to C.H. Patterson. *Journal of the Humanities*, 12(4), 2-17.
- Schon, F.(1987). The problems with overgeneralizing in multicultural societies. *Multicultural Studies*, 6(5), 40-52.
- Weaver, H.N.(1998). Indigenous people in a multicultural society: Unique issues for human services. *Journal of the Humanities*, 8(2), 1-23.