

ENGLISH 100
FINAL EXAM
SPRING 2003-2004



What These Kids Need Is Discipline
By
Jonathan Myers

1. I'm a very old-fashioned and strict parent, like my own father. He wanted me to become a barrister, like him, but I used to say to him that he'd made me secure enough not to worry about having a proper job. He was very disappointed when I said I was going to be a writer, but I think that was out of anxiety: he didn't know how I would survive in the world.
2. As a child I was really proud of my father. I have an image of him, 6ft 5in and broad-shouldered, wearing a smart suit and tie and behaving maturely—an image I feel I should live up to. My father had status in other people's eyes. I worry that I didn't give my children that. They don't see me wearing a suit and going out to work or having status: they see me slobbing around at home in shorts and no shoes.
3. I think children want to feel proud of their parents because it makes them feel secure in a Darwinian sense. The one time that my children knew how to rate my professional life was when I was nominated for an Oscar for my adaptation of *The Canterbury Tales*—my lucky break. Briefly, I was elevated in their eyes. When I didn't win I felt that I had let them down, which is ridiculous. I had one little cry because I felt I had failed.
4. I have inherited from my father a strong sense of the importance of doing the right thing. And like him, I am strict, even though I lack the sort of authority bubble he had around him. In the right context, my children are allowed to be rude to me—they might call me 'fat face' in a jokey way, when I would never have dared.
5. But I'm also very authoritarian: I believe strongly in proper bedtimes, that chores have to be done and that certain times of the day—when Julie and I have an evening drink—are reserved for adults, which the children are not allowed to interrupt.
6. Some parents of our children's friends have told Julie that their children are scared of me because I am so strict with my own children. I know I have quite a demonic image in a few families' eyes. But I want to make my children into the sort of children I want them to be.
7. We live in a terribly liberal age when people feel they should take a back seat in making moral decisions. I don't think that children should make up their own

...minds—and saying that is about as unfashionable as you can get. But if you don't influence them, they will only be influenced by others.

8. I don't believe in reasoning with my children. They do what mummy and daddy say. If you say to a child, 'Would you like to go to bed now?' no child in his right mind will agree, and if he does, he needs to be seen by two psychiatrists immediately.
9. Julie and I don't let our children watch television after 6 pm, ever. It's important to think through why a programme is being made. If it's fun, that's fine, but I can't stand all those Saturday morning programmes that are really just to promote the latest pop records and to persuade people to buy accessories. Our children watch it for an hour after school and then it goes off. They never ask to turn it on again.
10. I think it's a parent's job to preserve childhood as long as possible—which is also terribly unfashionable. We are proud of the fact that Jacob, at 10, still likes cuddly toys.
11. In our house we never buy toys which are fashionable crazes, such as Furbies. We held out against getting a Nintendo for a year, even though everyone else in Jacob's class had one. But I cracked when he said, "I don't understand why, if I'm good and I do all my homework and I do everything right, I don't have a Nintendo and all the bad boys do." I thought that was a very strong argument.
12. Jacob could not believe it when we got him a Nintendo for his birthday. But we still lay down rules about its limited use, which he has never argued with because that is the atmosphere in the house.
13. I am strict about homework and achievement. Our children will work hard until they finish university, and I think they will thank me for the rest of their lives. If they do drop out, at least they will have made a conscious choice.
14. At the moment the older two are doing well at school and sometimes I try to raise the amount of homework they are given. Jacob protests because I make him take it into school, which makes him look clever. He is already at the top of his form—and that in itself is very difficult for him.
15. I don't watch football, so nor does Jacob. That is also hard for him. Last year he had a tough time at school in terms of low-intensity bullying. Had he been interested in football, he would have had a *lingua franca* with the others in his year. I was not prepared to change, however. I don't like the attitudes in football.



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ESSAY TOPICS

Time Allowed: 90 minutes

Directions: Choose one of the following topics and develop it into an essay of four paragraphs.

1. The relationship between many teenagers and their parents is not always smooth. It can be very rough sometimes. Explain the reasons that lead to the emergence of tension and stress in the relationship between a teenager and his mother and father.
2. Tolerance is lacking in the world today. There are people who neither recognize nor respect the rights and opinions of other people or nations. Explain how the lack of tolerance is affecting the world today.
3. After one semester at AUB, you have come to notice different types of students. Show how AUB students are similar or different.
4. Would you rather have one TV set in every room of the house so that every one could watch his or her favorite shows, or one TV set in the house for everybody to share? Explain providing reasons for your choice.

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Time Allowed: 90 minutes

Name: _____

Directions: In your own words, answer each of the following questions. Be sure to use correct sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the grade will be deducted for grammatical and sentence structure mistakes. Please limit yourself to the space provided.

1. Write T (true) or F (false) in the blanks (5 pts.). Correct the false statements (5 pts.).

a. The author grew up to be a barrister, just like his father.

b. The author does not have any friends left because he was very strict with their children.

c. The author's children do not respect what he does for a living.

d. The author and his wife feel embarrassed that their 10 year-old son still likes toys.

e. The author accepts and encourages the way parents behave in this liberal age because he is a liberal person himself.

2. What does the author mean by a "proper job"? (5 pts.)

Why doesn't he have one? Explain, referring to the text. (5 pts.)

3. Name 4 qualities of the author as a parent. (5 pts.)

4. How is the author different from his father? (5 pts.)

5. What did the author mean when he said "but I think that was out of anxiety"? (paragraph 1) Explain. (10 pts.)

6. The author declares, "When I didn't win I felt that I had let them down, which is ridiculous." Why does the author conclude that his feeling was ridiculous? Explain. (10 pts.)

7. Quote the thesis statement of the text if it is stated or generate it if it is not. (15 pts.)

8. What does the author mean when he says in paragraph 7 "But if you don't influence them, they will be influenced by others"? Explain in your own words. (10 pts.)
