Student

Mr. Johnson

Honors English 1

28 February, 2021

Why should zoos become conservation centers?

Zoo director David Hancocks said “In reality, most zoos have had no contact of any kind with any reintroduction program” (10 Facts About Zoos). In 2010 an investigator found sick animals helpless and dead animals rotting at Tweddle Farm Zoo (10 Facts About Zoos). It has come to people's attention the way animals are getting treated and has now become an bigger issue. Zoos should not be able to capture and keep animals in a small antisocial space.

More and more articles have been coming out about how zoos should become conservation centers where they care for the sick animals in their natural habitat. Zoos do not only capture animals but also do not provide a sufficient amount of space which affects them in an awful way. Whether animals are hurt/ill or not they are being taken from their home to be displayed for public entertainment through a glass container. Each animal lives in a different habitat and putting a polar bear and an elephant in the same area is harmful to the animals and possibly the people around them. Zoos may have some negative features, however they do help young kids learn more about animals and give almost extinct animals a place to be protected. Taking care of animals is a necessary goal for the world to make it a better place.

Animals in the wild have a great deal of room; yet in a zoo they are not given an acceptable amount of space. Lions are animals that roam around and do not stay in the same place but in their cages they have 18,000 times less space in a zoo than in the wild (10 Facts About Zoos). Lions spend 48% of their time pacing because they do not have the space they should have (10 Facts About Zoos). As they are given a smaller spot it can start to affect them physically and mentally. This is the same with polar bears except their cage is 1 millionth the size of their home and 25% of captive polar bears also pace around (Mark Derr). The polar bears are being taken from their home to stay in a smaller and probably wrong temperature habitat for people to see. African elephants can live 36 years in the wild but when held in captivity they live around 17 years old (Maxthkms). They do not have the same opportunities to roam and meet other elephants. At the zoo they may not even have another elephant in there, if this happens they can show signs of sadness. Living in a smaller place is affecting the physical and mental of their well being and can reveal strange behaviors than seen in their original home.

Animal captivity first began in 2500 BCE in Egypt and Mesopotamia to show off wealth, and now animal captivity is shown for entertainment (Zoo). A study found that 79% of animals from aquariums were caught in the wild in the UK (10 Facts About Zoos). The animals were taken from the wild where they were free and could go wherever, to a 225 gallon container for saltwater animals (Aquarium Weights & Sizes). In Europe 70% of elephants in zoos were taken from the wild (10 Facts About Zoos). Elephants are huge and being in a 1 acre area when they usually have 640,000 acres is not as comfortable for them as it looks (Staff Writer). In 2010, an elephant at Woburn Safari Park had been training to use an electric goad (10 Facts About Zoos). They have been teaching elephants how to do tricks to be used as entertainment for themselves. Animals are in captivity for zoos, circus and exotic pets, just for entertainment with no room even though they were stolen from their home.

Each animal grows and develops in their different environment but when put in the same environment there can be upsetting side effects. In May 2007, Maggie (elephant at Alaska Zoo) was found lying on her left side and couldn't get up (Maggie’s Story). The weather in Alaska is not fit for an Indian elephant that grew in hot weather. Polar bear, Szenja, died suddenly at San Diego, Sea World (Lori Weisberg). A polar bear in San Diego, Calofiana is horrible for the animal because the polar bear grew up in Germany before being captured. The polar bear was not in the right habitat and space to grow up. Of 77 elephants it is found that the animals spent 83% of their time indoors in 13 UK zoos (Sample, Ian). Most elephants do not want to spend their time outside because the habitat is not right for them and there is not enough space. All of these animals have something in common and that is they are getting hurt from not being in the right place. Putting the animals in captivity in the right habitat can help them live longer and feel better than in a bad, small place.

Over half the kids that go to a zoo get an education about the animals shown in the entertainment area. The Oklahoma City Zoo has a 6.5-acre tropical habitat exhibit which students can learn and see the animals' habitat. In 2017, Arabian Oryx were almost extinct till Phoenix Zoo and others saved them and put them back in their home (Jennifer Bove). They saved an almost extinct animal while teaching kids about different animals in acres of different habitats. There are some issues with zoos, children see the animals in a poor state from being locked up and some zoos and aquariums do not give basic information of the animals shown. 41% of animals at UK aquariums do not have signs with information teaching the kids about them (10 Facts About Zoos). Students come to learn about the animals at a zoo or aquarium and if there is no basic information about what they are seeing then why put the animals there. There is an upside and a bad side to zoos, but they teach kids a bit more about animals then learning about them at school.

Zoos should not be able to capture animals and use them as entertainment. There are a lot of reasons why zoos are not the best for animals but they do have their positive takes. Zoos only have a considerable amount of room but not large enough for the animals normal habitat. Animals all over the world are taken captive to become entertainment for us. When they are taken captive and put in tiny areas they are also not given the right habitat which causes the animals to suffer. Zoos and aquariums do help children learn about animals up close and see them in an artificial habitat. Animals should be treated better than objects shown off in a glass container. We need to take care of our planet and the creatures on the planet.

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Student2

Mr. Johnson

Honors English 9

3 May 2021

Please Rise for the National Anthem

Late August in 2016, the San Francisco 49er’s quarterback, Colin Kaepernick took a stand-- or a knee-- against the oppression of colored individuals under the American flag. From that moment, many others from all across the United States of America have been following Kaepernick’s lead by kneeling during the national anthem. There are various opinions as to whether or not kneeling during the national anthem is an appropriate and effective form of protest, but there is extensive evidence that proves that it is. People’s personal values, the support from social media, and the First Amendment itself all point towards the positives of this argument.

It is appropriate to engage in protest if one believes that the circumstances stated in the lyrics of the national anthem and the symbolic meaning of the flag itself are not being represented within the borders of this country. As Kaepernick states himself, “I’m not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color… To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way,” (Wyche). Kaepernick doesn’t agree that it is appropriate to honor a country where black people are still being treated unjustly and with subjugation, regardless of how much awareness is being raised. The Denver Broncos linebacker, Brandon Marshall also declares, “the message is I’m against social injustice… I’m not against the military or police or America at all.” (Sport) The first thing most people would think when someone is kneeling during the national anthem is that their intent is to disrespect the flag and the warriors who have fought for the freedom of this country. This clarification proves that the intent behind most of these people’s actions are commonly misconstrued as something negative or hateful, yet the action holds much more meaning than that. Kirk Price, an Army veteran and NASCAR official also voices his support to the protest by saying, “I fully respect the flag… That’s not what the issue is here. The issue is African Americans being oppressed for so long under the flag… But to be honest with you, I know what the flag stands for and I know about Black people being oppressed because I am one.” (NASCAR) This comes to show that many people, not just NFL players, have used this method of protest based on their personal morals and beliefs. This evinces that many people agree that racism and oppression of people of color is still going on in America, so they choose to protest in ways that they believe will convey a powerful message.

Many can also argue that Kaepernick kneeling on national television is a very effective way to promote a cause, as it provokes many people to talk and base an opinion around it. The widespread coverage of this specific case encourages lots of talk, such as when NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said, “I truly respect our players wanting to speak out and change the community… We want them to use that voice.” (Kneeling) Just like Goodell, there are many other people associated with the NFL that support Kaepernick in his actions and have publicly spoken out about it. Support within Kaepernick’s community played a major role in the support, and backlash, he also received from the media. Something as popular as a professional football game is a very useful platform to send a message, and even gain the attention of various crowds of people; more specifically the U.S. military, as “members of the armed forces who support Kaepernick’s right to protest by posting under the hashtag #VeteransForKaepernick” (jenniferleechan). The flurry of discussion Kaepernick caused across all social media platforms proved to be extremely effective once U.S. Veterans began to voice their support, and even drew some antis to change their opinions.

Kaepernick’s actions are also completely justifiable in terms of the law, as there was no law stating that one *must* stand in attention while the national anthem is being sung/played. The First Amendment “guarantees freedom of expression by prohibiting Congress from restricting the press or the rights of individuals to speak freely. It also guarantees the right of citizens to assemble peaceably and to petition their government.” (Cornell Law School) Since the First Amendment states that individuals have freedom of expression, Kaepernick was abiding peacefully by that as no physical harm was inflicted from his side. President Barack Obama also addressed that Kaepernick was “exercising his constitutional right to make a statement.” (CNN) So if any further confirmation was needed to prove whether or not what Kaepernick did was legal, President Obama was merely restating a law that had been in place for centuries before his time.

Aside from the complaints about Kaepernick’s action causing a divide within the country, a worthy opposing point made is that “Kneeling during the national anthem is an ineffective and counterproductive way to promote a cause.” (Kneeling) A law in the NFL that changed after this event was, “This season, all league and team personnel shall stand and show respect for the flag and the anthem. Personnel who choose not to stand for the anthem may stay in the locker room until after the anthem has been performed.” (“What Is the NFL’s National Anthem Protest Policy? Here Are the Rules for Kneeling in 2020”) The cause has proven effective enough for the NFL to make a change to their rules about players’ etiquette during the national anthem. There is now more room for people who don’t wish to stand and salute to wait in the locker rooms. This is a major step because before, players had to abide by the rules and if they failed to do so, they would face consequences that could very much end their careers.

There are many arguable points that support the claim that Kaepernick’s actions were completely appropriate and justifiable. Personal beliefs, social media influence, and legal rights are just some out of many and although this happened 4 years ago, protests against inequality continue to rise up. It is with high hopes that this everlasting battle can one day come to an end.

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Student3

Johnson

Honors English

May 3, 2021

Lowering the Voting Age

Half a century ago, a movement to lower the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen swept the country. The issue has now arisen once again, but this time the argument is to lower the legal voting age to sixteen. There are many valid arguments both for and against the idea, but ultimately sixteen and seventeen-year-olds should be allowed to vote and have a voice in U.S. politics. These teens are ready to vote, their votes would benefit society, and they are at a better place in their lives to start voting than eighteen-year-olds.

Lowering the voting age is a decades-old debate, and definitely not a new issue to the United States. In 1971 the 26th Amendment was ratified, lowering the legal voting age from twenty-one to eighteen. The movement’s main argument in the sixties was that if eighteen-year-olds could be drafted for war, then they should have the right to vote (Astor). Since 1990, there have been multiple attempts across the country to lower the voting age to at least sixteen. The topic has been brought up more recently in light of recent gun violence and school shooting issues (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”).

There are many reasons that sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are ready to vote and make decisions about the future of their country. The first is that intelligence and education are not voting qualifications (“Who Can and Can't Vote in U.S. Elections.”). Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds aren’t any less qualified to vote than people over the age of eighteen. Not all voting adults have finished their educations, so the fact that most sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are still in high school shouldn’t be a factor that keeps them from being able to vote. This isn’t the only way in which these older teenagers could be as ready to vote as adults. An article mentioned that “[t]he age of 16 is when people’s relationship with the law changes as they often start driving, working, and paying taxes (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”).” Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are reaching a point in their lives where they are starting to become affected by their country’s laws. It is only fair that they should get to have a say in them. At this age, teens also start noticing and being impacted by many of the country’s current social issues. Gun violence, specifically in terms of school shootings, is a serious problem that has affected many students around the country (Walker). However, despite being some of the individuals most directly impacted by the issue, teens still have no say in decisions about gun control. These sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are qualified and ready; they deserve a vote in decisions about their future.

While it does benefit them in many ways, allowing sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to vote would also benefit United States society. A study by the Pew Research Center proves how the upcoming generation of teens could have a dramatic influence on the United States. It found that “[Fourty-eight percent] of people age six to twenty-one are racial or ethnic minorities (“Nearly Half of Post-Millennials Are Racial or Ethnic Minorities”).”This study demonstrates how Generation Z is one of the country’s most diverse generations. Lowering the voting age would increase the overall diversity of voters and amplify the voices of those in racial or ethnic minorities. Another issue currently facing the United States is voter turnout. An article states: “The U.S. history that students typically learn at [age sixteen], combined with the power to vote at the same time...would create ‘lifelong, habitual voters’(Myers and Mehta).” Allowing people to start voting at age sixteen, when students are learning about their country’s history in school, will make them more likely to continue voting later in life. In a country with “one of the lowest voter turnout rates among developed countries (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”)”, creating good voting habits in teens and young adults is essential. These are just two of the many ways that lowering the voting age to sixteen would benefit society.

Another reason to lower the voting age is that there are many benefits to voting for the first time at age sixteen or seventeen instead of eighteen. An article states that “...teachers and parents help them overcome typical obstacles for first-time voters, such as the registration process and finding their polling places (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”).” The parental guidance available to teens still living at home makes it easier for them to vote for the first time. On the other hand, eighteen-year-olds and young adults are often no longer living with their parents and can be discouraged by the complexity of the voting process (Mandal). Another article discussed the ways in which sixteen-year-olds are often more connected to their community and local issues than eighteen-year-olds (Mandal). At eighteen, people usually move away from home; while they might still be voting on things that affect their communities, they most likely don’t have the same appreciation or awareness of these issues as teens who are still living at home. The age of eighteen is also an important transition period in most people’s lives. An article states that “...young, newly enfranchised voters often postpone navigating the voting process to focus on employment, higher education and settling into new cities.” (Myers and Mehta) Eighteen-year-olds are often moving away from home for the first time and concerned about college or their first full-time job. Voting can become less of a priority when added to the mix along with these life-altering changes. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are really at a better point in their lives to vote for the first time, as they are more likely to have the necessary time and resources.

There are many fairly presented arguments and concerns from the opposing side of this issue. One is that teens under the age of eighteen aren’t mature enough to vote. While this might seem true at first, research proves otherwise. An article states: “Adolescents’ judgment in situations that permit unhurried decision-making and consultation with others – what psychologists call “cold cognition” – is likely to be as mature as that of adults by 16 (Steinberg).” In a situation like an election, a teen voter would have time to think about their decision and consult trusted adults. This means that most people over the age of sixteen will generally have the same ability to make decisions regarding voting; the argument that older teens aren’t “mature enough” is invalid. Another fair argument is that sixteen and seventeen-year-olds aren’t well-informed on the government and social issues. However, one article brings up a good counterpoint. It says that “Having grown up with the Internet, younger generations have greater access to information, well beyond the pages of a textbook (Myers and Mehta).” The internet makes all kinds of information much more accessible than ever before, and it gives people the ability to educate themselves on almost anything. Today’s sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are exposed to social issues via the internet, and have the resources available to research and become knowledgeable on them. In addition to this, teens today are heavily involved in political issues, and “Gen Z activists have been a driving force in causes such as climate change, the Black Lives Matter movement, and LGBTQ rights” (Myers and Mehta). This proves that they are not only aware of the country’s social issues, but care enough to take action. Though these arguments from the opposing side seem valid at first glance, they are somewhat shallow and not well-supported.

Lowering the voting age from eighteen to sixteen would be beneficial to sixteen and seventeen-year-olds, as well as society as a whole. These teens are ready to have a voice in their country’s politics. Allowing sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to vote would have a variety of positive effects on them, their communities, and their future voting habits. Today’s teens are the future of the United States, and their votes and voices would bring a much-needed fresh perspective to the table.

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# Argumentative Essay template:

1. **Introduction:**
   1. Half a century ago, a movement to lower the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen swept the country; now it is starting to become an issue once again, but this time the argument is to lower the legal voting age to sixteen. There are many valid arguments both for and against the idea, but ultimately sixteen and seventeen-year-olds should be allowed to vote and have a voice in U.S. politics.
   2. ...sixteen and seventeen-year-olds should be allowed to vote and have a voice in U.S. politics. These teens are ready to vote, their votes would benefit society, and they are at a better place in their lives to start voting than eighteen-year-olds.
2. **Context paragraph**
   1. A decades-old debate, lowering the voting age is not a new issue in the United States.
   2. In 1971, the 26th Amendment was ratified, lowering the legal voting age from twenty-one to eighteen. The argument then was that if eighteen-year-olds could be drafted for war, then they should have the right to vote (Astor). Since 1990, there have been attempts across the country to lower the voting age to at least sixteen. The topic has been brought up yet again in light of recent gun violence and school shooting issues (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”).
3. **Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are ready to vote.** 
   1. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are ready to vote and make decisions about the future of their country.
   2. Intelligence and education are not voting qualifications. (“Who Can and Can't Vote in U.S. Elections.”)
   3. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds aren’t any less qualified to vote than adults. Not all voting adults have finished their educations, so that most people in this age group are still in high school shouldn’t be a factor that keeps them from being able to vote.
   4. “The age of 16 is when people’s relationship with the law changes as they often start driving, working, and paying taxes.” (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”)
   5. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds are starting to become affected by their country’s laws, so they should get to have a say in them. At this age teens also notice and are impacted by many of the country’s current social issues.
      1. Gun violence, specifically in terms of school shootings, is an issue that has affected many teens around the country (Walker). However, they still have no say in decisions about gun control.
4. **Lowering the voting age to 16 would be beneficial to society.** 
   1. Allowing sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to vote would benefit United States society in many ways.
   2. 48% of people age six to twenty-one are racial or ethnic minorities. (“Nearly Half of Post-Millennials Are Racial or Ethnic Minorities”)
   3. Generation Z is one of the country’s most diverse generations. Lowering the voting age would increase the overall diversity of voters and amplify the voices of those in racial or ethnic minorities.
   4. “The U.S. history that students typically learn at [age sixteen], combined with the power to vote at the same time...would create ‘lifelong, habitual voters.’” (Myers and Mehta)
   5. Allowing people to start voting at age sixteen, when students are learning about their country’s history, will make them more likely to continue voting later in life. In a country with “one of the lowest voter turnout rates among developed countries” (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”), creating good voting habits in teens and young adults is essential.
5. **It’s better to start voting at sixteen vs. eighteen.**

There are many benefits to voting for the first time at age sixteen or seventeen instead of eighteen.

* 1. “...teachers and parents help them overcome typical obstacles for first-time voters, such as the registration process and finding their polling places.” (“Lowering the Voting Age - Top 3 Pros and Cons”)
  2. The parental guidance available to teens still living at home makes it easier for them to vote for the first time. Eighteen-year-olds and young adults, on the other hand, are often no longer living with their parents and can be discouraged by the complexity of the voting process (Mandal).
  3. Sixteen-year-olds are more connected to their community and local issues than eighteen-year-olds (Mandal).
  4. At eighteen, people usually move away from home, and while they might still be voting on things that affect their communities, they most likely don’t have the same appreciation or awareness of these issues as teens who are still living at home.
  5. “...young, newly enfranchised voters often postpone [navigating the voting process](https://www.npr.org/2020/07/30/896993401/poll-more-than-half-of-young-people-lack-resources-to-vote-by-mail) to focus on employment, higher education and settling into new cities.” (Myers and Mehta)
  6. Eighteen-year-olds are at an obvious transition period in their lives, often moving away from home for the first time and concerned about college or their first full-time job. Voting is less of a priority among these life-altering changes. Sixteen-year-olds are at a better point in their lives to vote for the first time, as they are more likely to have the necessary time and resources.

1. **Counterclaim**
   1. Teens under the age of eighteen aren’t mature enough to vote.
      1. “Adolescents’ judgment in situations that permit unhurried decision-making and consultation with others – what psychologists call “cold cognition” – is likely to be as mature as that of adults by 16.” (Steinberg)
      2. In a situation like an election, a teen would have time to think about their decision and consult trusted adults. It is scientifically proven that sixteen-year-olds have the same decision-making skills as adults in these scenarios.
   2. Sixteen and seventeen-year-olds aren’t well-informed on the government and social issues.
      1. “Having grown up with the Internet, younger generations have greater access to information, well beyond the pages of a textbook” (Myers and Mehta)
      2. The Internet makes all kinds of information much more accessible than ever before, and it gives people the ability to educate themselves on almost anything. In addition to this, today’s teens are heavily involved in political issues, and “Gen Z activists have been a driving force in causes such as climate change, the Black Lives Matter movement, and LGBTQ rights” (Myers and Mehta).
2. **Conclusion paragraph:**
   1. Lowering the voting age from eighteen to sixteen would be beneficial to both sixteen and seventeen-year-olds, and society as a whole.
   2. These teens are ready to have a voice in their country’s politics. Allowing sixteen and seventeen-year-olds to vote would have a variety of positive effects on them, their communities, and their future voting habits.
   3. Today’s teens are the future of the United States, and their votes would bring a much-needed fresh perspective to the table.
3. **Works Cited Page**
   1. Works Cited should be on a separate page. (Ctrl + enter to create a page break)
   2. Use mybib.com
   3. Alphabetize your entries
   4. Make sure entries are double spaced, with no space between entries, and have a hanging indent if the entry is longer than one line.