A Short Exercise on Essay Writing

Objective
In this activity, you will plan the structure of an essay by choosing a thesis statement, topic sentences and supporting details, and a review of the main points.

Activity
From the list below, choose the sentence that would be an effective thesis statement.

a) Wild animals should not be kept in captivity.

b) Orcas have long fins on their back known as dorsal fins.

c) Orcas usually live in groups of up to 40 members.

The correct answer is sentence ‘a’ “wild animals should not be kept in captivity.” This is because your thesis statement should be an opinion, not a fact.

From the list below, choose the topic sentence and corresponding supporting detail that best fit our thesis statement, which is “Wild animals should not be kept in captivity”.

a) When wild animals are kept captive, they become a potential threat to humans as they are unpredictable. The movie Free Willy features an Orca in captivity.

b) Orcas use echolocation to communicate with each other. They emit a noise that bounces back from objects around them.

c) When wild animals are kept captive, they become a potential threat to humans as they are unpredictable. For example, there are several cases of Orcas eating their trainers at SeaWorld and other sea parks.

The correct answer is paragraph ‘c’ which is “When wild animals are kept captive, they become a potential threat to humans as they are unpredictable. For example, there are several cases of Orcas killing their trainers at SeaWorld and other sea parks.”

From the list below, choose the topic sentence and corresponding supporting detail that best fit our thesis statement, which is “Wild animals should not be kept in captivity”.

a) The Orca feeds on fish and other marine animals. They have less space than they have in the wild, so they cannot roam freely.

b) Animals that are kept captive suffer. They have less space than they have in the wild, so they cannot roam freely.

c) Orcas work together to catch their food. The group forces fish into one area where they can take turns eating.
The correct answer is paragraph b, which says “Animals that are kept captive suffer. They have less space than they have in the wild, so they cannot roam freely.” This paragraph is relevant to the thesis statement.

From the list below, choose which of the two paragraphs would be the best review of the main points of our essay.

a) In conclusion, wild animals should not be kept in captivity. In captivity, they become a potential threat to humans due to their unpredictable nature. Captive animals suffer because their restricted space prevents them from roaming freely.

b) In conclusion, wild animals should not be kept in captivity. Many Zoos around the world have been shown to keep their animals malnourished.

The correct answer is paragraph ‘a’, which says “In conclusion, wild animals should not be kept in captivity. In captivity, they become a potential threat to humans due to their unpredictable nature. Captive animals suffer because their restricted space prevents them from roaming freely.” The conclusion should review the main points made in the essay.

Let’s Recap

Thesis statement: Wild animals should not be kept in captivity.

Topic Sentence and Supporting Detail #1: When wild animals are kept captive, they become a potential threat to humans as they are unpredictable. For example, there are several cases of Orcas eating their trainers at SeaWorld and other sea parks.

Topic Sentence and Supporting Detail #2: Animals that are kept captive suffer. They have less space than they have in the wild, so they cannot roam freely.

Conclusion: Review of Main Points: In conclusion, wild animals should not be kept in captivity. In captivity, they become a potential threat to humans due to their unpredictable nature. Captive animals suffer because their restricted space prevents them from roaming freely.

Congratulations on completing the exercise!