

2024 Section C Raw 50 Scorer Sample Essay ~ 29/10/2024

The recent phasing out of subsidies for Our Local Gym in favour of re-allocating council funding has been met with intense controversy regarding the future direction of the supposedly community-based business. In her enthused yet pleading speech, chair of the Our Local Gym committee, Sandy Gestalt, emphasises the financial predicament of the business and presents the collaboration with Long Live Lollies as an effective solution. Addressing the debate primarily through a community-focussed lens, Gestalt calls upon gym members to vote in favour of the partnership as a means to keep the business running as per usual. Accompanying the speech is a visual depicting the motto of Long Live Lollies and an image illustrating the integration of exercise and lollies.

From the outset, Gestalt overlays a primarily social argument, detailing the heritage of Our Local Gym and its past involvement in improving the lives of clientele. The strategic placement of such a culturally focussed argument at the forefront of her piece enables Gestalt to immediately foster a greater appreciation of the business and its communal value. Indeed, Gestalt's phrase "worked together – we worked out together" suggests a dual collaboration in both a professional and physical context, priming listeners to associate her forthcoming "business" proposal as a mere extension of these existing obligations. Through citing "we've built your fitness, your strength and your confidence" Gestalt attempts to remind gym members at the meeting of the physical and mental wellbeing they have derived from Our Local Gym, predisposing them to reciprocate this gesture through supporting the new business partnership. Whilst the tangible rewards of "fitness" and "strength" appeal to rationally inclined listeners, the psychological rewards of increased "confidence" emphasises the role of the gym in providing a deeper, existential fulfillment of gym-goers beyond the physical benefits. This emphasis on intangible outcomes as a core service exclusive to Our Local Gym is continued when Gestalt references the "shiny new equipment, giant flatscreen TVs" which characterise "larger commercial gyms". The juxtaposition of the conceited gym-goers who "[post] gym selfies" and Our Local's humble mission to "[accept] all bodies and all fitness journeys", places the gym as inclusive of all demographics and a force for social cohesion as opposed to the "competitive" environment fostered at larger gyms. Through deliberately placing a sense of community as a core and unique facet of Our Local Gyms, Gestalt seeks to portray her forthcoming request for the Live Long Lollies business partnership as one that is vested in social interests rather than commercial ones.

Developing from such a communal argument to a more solutions-based argument, Gestalt presents the business partnership as a viable route for ensuring the continued operation of Our Local Gym. Such a development of argument predisposes the audience to accept the solution, not out of a consideration of its practical benefits, but out of a desire to reciprocate the cultural heritage of the business and a trust in its desire for upholding community values over commercial interests. Gestalt strategically enumerates undesirable alternatives "raising... costs... closing the facility" in an attempt to present the business alliance as one that is simultaneously the only effective solution which does not devolve into pure corporate greed. Moreover, Gestalt strategically lists the benefits of the shopfront first, "grassroots community vibe... leave extra funds for upgrades", positioning the audience to immediately and reflexively accept the plan, such that the conflict of interest mentioned later on is undermined in light of the listeners instinctual inclination towards this alternative. By mentioning explicitly "we are for community, and they are for profit", Gestalt seeks to distance her business from Long Live Lollies commercial motives, allaying concerns within more sceptical listeners who may view the

move as purely financial in nature. The visual's headline "Focus on the Good" is perhaps a subtle nudge towards Gestalt's implicit request within the audience to also focus on the positives brought by the partnership as opposed to its drawbacks. The adjacent depiction of an anthropomorphised heart, a symbol of health and Our Local Gyms, and the chocolate bar, emblematic of Long Live Lollies, is a subtle attempt to make attendees more comfortable with her unification of two contrasting ideals: confectionary items and fitness.

Transitioning from this tactful register "there is no doubt... [there is] a serious clash", to a more optimistic tone "fun and laughter are as important", Gestalt focusses holistically on the psychological and communal benefits offered by the partnership. Such a shift in tone seeks to overshadow the competing interests aforementioned, whilst rousing a collective sense of enthusiasm towards the new proposal. The visual depicting a young girl doing splits with a lolly is once again, an attempt to subliminally integrate the two starkly divergent concepts of sweets and fitness. The symmetry of the image further conveys this sense of robustness and harmony which Gestalt seeks to consolidate not only within the business, but throughout the community which uses the gym. In a final call to action, Gestalt reminds listeners of their vote for those "who cannot attend... and those ... in the future", predisposing them to consider both the broader implications of their choice and their social responsibility to others. By introducing a degree of civic duty into voters' decision making, Gestalt dichotomises attendees into two groups: those who are pro-community and those who are not. By suggesting that voting against the proposal would be incongruous with the interests of "future" generations, Gestalt orients listeners to vote for the change, lest they be responsible the inability of future gym-goers to experience the holistic value offered by Our Local Gym. Footnoting her piece on a metaphor of "bend[ing] and stretch[ing]... stiff muscles", Gestalt seeks to convey the necessity of the proposal despite the initial distaste for it. Indeed, by using an analogy of exercise, Gestalt seeks to reinvolve into the idea of short-term pain and going beyond one's 'comfort zone' likely familiar to gym-goers, in an attempt frame the proposal as one that is ultimately beneficial for the overall wellbeing of their community.

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