

Let's Talk About Social Media
Essay #1: Letter to an Elderly Relative

Details:

3-4 pages

Typed, double-spaced

12 pt font with 1 inch margins

Prompt:

Imagine that you are at home during some holiday weekend with one of your good friends. You two are having a heated discussion about something shocking that a mutual friend recently posted on a social networking site (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc). Your grandfather, grandmother, or some elderly relative who happens to be visiting overhears your conversation and asks what you are talking about. You try to explain the situation to this relative, but given that s/he doesn't even use email, the concept of social networks is totally lost on her/him. Your relative shrugs it off as some meaningless internet fad and argues that it is inappropriate for young people to share that kind of personal information so publicly. The conversation ends with your relative saying, "You kids really have no shame."

A few days after the discussion, you are still troubled by your inability to explain the significance of social networks to your relative. You would really like your relative to understand what social networks mean to your generation and how they can bring people together in new ways. Write a letter to your relative in terms that s/he can understand, explaining:

- 1) what a social network is and how it works (you should pick a specific site, like Facebook or Instagram, so that you can use concrete examples to explain how it works) ,
- 2) why people of your generation use it in the way they do, and
- 3) how this shows that your generation's idea of **privacy** is different from your relative's

****You must use quotes from the readings to help back up your points.**

Tips for the essay:

-Be sure to write it in letter format.

-Always keep your audience in mind. Remember you are writing for someone from a different generation who might not see or understand the world the same way as you do.

-Remember, your reader is not familiar with the articles you have read for this class. Therefore, when introducing your quotes, make sure you give enough context for each quote so that your reader understands where the quote comes from and how it relates to what you're saying.

-Think carefully about what kind of tone you want to use in your letter. Should it be humorous? Playful? Serious? Judgmental? Informative? What might be the benefits of using one tone over another? Perhaps different parts of the letter will require different tones.