

Englannin kielen ylioppilaskoe Syksy 2024

“Malli”kirjoitelmat – tekijä **Chatty Gepetto**

16.1

Scenes from a Train Window

You are taking a course in literature and are asked to write a composition discussing your thoughts on this poem by Brian Bilston. The author introduces his poem: “On the way up to Scotland and trying to write a poem about the view from my train window but it’s all going by too quickly”.



Buddleia

A pylon looms up suddenly like a sini-
Two birds puncture the early morning blue as th-
Cows stare into the distance and wonde-
Fields sleep drowsily, waiting for-
Buddleia bubbles up along the tr-
A woman waves at her youn-
Some buildings.
Graffiti.
Wolverhampton Railway Station.

16.1

Scenes from a Train Window

Reading Brian Bilston's poem, I'm reminded of my own experiences looking out a train window. The poem brilliantly captures the fleeting nature of these moments, as landscapes flash by faster than we can fully absorb them. It's like trying to hold water in your hands—just as you catch one sight, another slips through your fingers. Bilston's incomplete lines echo this, giving us glimpses of scenes that feel real yet remain just out of reach.

In the poem, ordinary scenes like cows in a field, birds in flight, and graffiti-covered walls come alive briefly before being interrupted. Bilston begins describing something—a pylon, a woman waving, fields waiting—but stops abruptly. This structure feels disorienting at first, but it reflects what happens when we watch the world from a moving train: thoughts start to form only to be interrupted by something new.

There's also a subtle tension in the poem, which I think reflects our own urge to capture or make sense of things that are fleeting. For instance, the image of cows "staring into the distance" suggests a calm scene, yet the cutoff mid-line implies that even this peace is disrupted by the train's relentless speed. It's a bit ironic how the poem feels incomplete, yet in its disjointedness, it conveys the fullness of this journey.

Overall, Bilston's poem reminds me that sometimes it's okay to just experience the fragments rather than grasping the whole. There's beauty in the unfinished, a lesson in watching and moving on, much like the poem—and the view from a train window—demands of us.

16.2

Perfectionism: Strength or Weakness

In the debate club at your exchange school the topic of the week is perfectionism. Are we aiming for an impossible goal, or should we all strive for perfect results in any or all aspects of our lives? You may use the video by Thomas Curran as inspiration if you like. Write your contribution to the debate, and argue for your viewpoint.

Perfectionism: Strength or Weakness?

In my view, perfectionism is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it drives people to set high standards and push themselves further, often leading to impressive results. When we strive to do our best, we learn new skills, work harder, and achieve things we may not have thought possible. Many of the world's greatest accomplishments have come from people who weren't satisfied with "good enough."

However, perfectionism can also be a weakness. If we aim for flawless results in every part of life, we risk wasting time, becoming overly critical, and, ironically, never actually finishing what we start. This is especially true in areas where perfection isn't always possible or even necessary. For example, if you're writing an essay, aiming for a perfect argument might prevent you from seeing other points of view. Or, if you're doing a project, the fear of making mistakes could stop you from being creative or trying new ideas.

Perfectionism can also harm our mental health. If we're always chasing an impossible standard, we'll often feel disappointed and frustrated. This can lead to stress, anxiety, and even burnout. Instead of motivating us, perfectionism can become a burden that stops us from enjoying what we do and appreciating what we accomplish.

So, should we aim for perfection? I would say no. Striving for excellence is great, but we need to accept that some flaws are part of life. Being willing to make mistakes and learn from them is just as important as aiming high. In the end, it's about finding a balance between doing our best and letting ourselves be human. Perfection might be impossible, but growth and progress are always within reach.

16.3

Quality Education

Quality Education is one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. How do you think Finland is doing? What is already of good quality and what should be improved? The International Youth Forum is asking for opinions on the topic from young people all over the world.

Quality Education in Finland: Where We Excel and Where We Can Improve

Finland is known worldwide for its high-quality education system, and I'm proud to say that much of this reputation is well deserved. Finnish schools emphasize equality, critical thinking, and a supportive learning environment. Teachers are highly trained, respected, and trusted to adapt their methods to suit different students. Additionally, education in Finland is free from early childhood to university, which promotes equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of background. These factors help explain why Finnish students consistently perform well in global comparisons, especially in literacy, problem-solving, and scientific knowledge.

However, there is always room for improvement, even in a system as strong as ours. One area where I think Finland could improve is in adapting education to future job markets. The world is changing rapidly, with new technologies and industries emerging, but our school curriculum sometimes lags behind. For example, there could be more emphasis on digital skills, entrepreneurship, and other practical subjects that prepare us for a world that values flexibility and creativity.

Another area for growth is mental health support. Finnish students experience increasing academic pressure, which leads to stress and burnout, especially in high school. While there is some mental health support, the resources are often limited, and many students feel that help is not readily accessible. Prioritizing mental well-being alongside academic excellence would make our education system stronger and ensure students are truly equipped for life.

In summary, Finland's education system is a model of quality in many ways, from accessibility to high teaching standards. But to keep up with the demands of a rapidly changing world, we should continue adapting our curriculum and providing more mental health resources. Only by doing so can we ensure that Finland's education remains truly world-class.

16.4

Artificial Intelligence: Threat or Opportunity?

Artificial Intelligence has penetrated our culture in recent years. What are some of the uses of AI that you are familiar with, either through personal experience or the media? Do you see AI as a threat or an opportunity in these uses? Write your contribution to an online discussion.

Artificial Intelligence: Threat or Opportunity?

Artificial Intelligence has become a major part of our lives, both in ways we notice and in many we don't. From personal experience, I use AI when interacting with voice assistants like Siri and when getting recommendations from apps like Spotify or Netflix. In these cases, AI makes life more convenient and even enjoyable by adapting to our preferences. In the media, AI is often presented in extremes—as either a savior or a threat. Personally, I think it can be both, depending on how we use it.

In terms of opportunity, AI has huge potential to improve healthcare, education, and environmental sustainability. For example, AI is used to analyze medical data and can help doctors make faster and more accurate diagnoses. In education, AI-based programs can provide personalized learning experiences, which could be especially useful for students who need extra support. AI is also helping scientists develop solutions for climate change, such as optimizing renewable energy sources. These are clear examples of how AI could create positive change.

However, there are also legitimate concerns. One major issue is job displacement. Many people worry that AI will replace human workers in fields like manufacturing, customer service, and even transportation as self-driving technology advances. While new jobs may be created, there is no guarantee that everyone will find suitable work in this new economy. There are also ethical concerns, such as AI's potential for surveillance and data privacy violations, especially when it's used by companies and governments. If not regulated carefully, AI could threaten our privacy and freedoms.

Overall, I see AI as more of an opportunity than a threat, but only if we approach it responsibly. To benefit from AI's potential, we need to balance innovation with caution, focusing on fair use, regulation, and ethical guidelines. AI is a powerful tool, and like any tool, it can be used well or misused. It's up to us to decide how it will shape our future.