Being the Change

Today’s society is far from perfect. There are problems all over the world, ranging from the United States to China. Problems, ranging from individual and human rights, animal rights, environmental issues, political issues, religious intolerance, etc., that need to be addressed. Far too often do individuals talk about why an issue is wrong, and not do anything to change those circumstances. As Mahatma Ghandi said, “You must be the change you want to see in the world.” **Your goal** is to become a more involved, active, global citizen!

**Assignment**: Write a persuasive letter to an individual, newspaper, institution, etc., in order to inspire social change. For example, you could write to Rick Santorum on why gay marriage should be legal, or to Obama on why it was wrong to lift the ban on financially supporting countries that enlist child soldiers. Your subject should be something you have strong, passionate feelings about, in relation to human rights, political issues, the environment, etc. You should use aggressive language in your letters to help express the seriousness of your claim (ex. Gay marriage NEEDS to be legalized, because…). **Your purpose** is to inspire change by changing your audience(s)’s stance on whatever issue you choose to write about.

**Requirements:**

* A professional salutation
  + e.g. “To Whom It May Concern”, “Dear Mr. John Doe”, etc.
* A clear and definitive stance on your topic
  + e.g. Gay marriage needs to be legalized in all 50 states of America.
* Reasons as to why the issue needs to be changed/addressed
  + The United States should never fund countries who use child soldiers, because…
* The inclusion of where you received your initial information from
  + e.g. ABC News, www.change.org, etc.
* At least 2 reliable, citable statistics that strengthen your argument
  + e.g. In 2011, there were 1.2 million individuals in gay relationships in the United States, as reported by…
* Reasons why the opposition is wrong, concerning your topic
  + e.g. Financially supporting countries who force children to become soldiers is not acceptable, even to gain their alliance for the war in Afghanistan, because…
* A professional complimentary close
  + e.g. “Sincerely”, “Thank You”, etc.

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|  | Excellent (9 points) | Competent (6 points) | Emerging (3 points) |
| Clarity | The stance was clear and the opinion of the author was apparent and authoritative | The stance was written, but not presented as effectively as possible, the author’s opinion was not authoritative | The stance is unclear and the author’s opinion is unknown |
| Arguments | The arguments for change were presented firmly and convincingly – Uses assertive language to convince audience (Need, has, etc.) | The arguments for change were present, but not as convincing as possible – Uses passive language to convince the audience (Should, want, etc.) | The arguments for change were not effectively present |
| Rebuttal | The author refutes claims made by the addressee of the letter effectively, provides alternatives to issue when needed | The author refutes claims made by the addressee ineffectively; does not provide alternatives if possible | The author does not address claims made by the addressee |
| Sources | The author uses and cites 2 reliable sources, strengthening their argument | The author uses sources but did not cite them; the author did not use relevant sources | The author does not use reliable sources; did not cite reliable sources |
| Grammar/Spelling | The author uses correct spelling throughout the persuasive letter – Uses complex sentences and varying sentence structure | The author mostly uses proper grammar and spelling throughout the letter, but mistakes are present – Uses some complex sentences and some differentiated structure | The author mostly uses improper grammar and poor spelling – Does not use complex sentences or varied sentence structure |