

Informative Expository Essay Examples

Example 1: Why Do we Yawn?

Yawning is contagious, it is said. However, how much do we know about it? It is obviously a curiosity among millions of people, as one of the most searched-for queries on Google is “Why do we yawn?” There are multiple theories about why we yawn: to bring more oxygen into the blood and move more carbon dioxide out of the blood when our breathing slows (from being tired or bored), to stretch the lungs and lung tissue (to flex our muscles and joints, raise our heart rate, and be more awake), to redistribute surfactant to lubricate the lungs and to make sure they do not collapse, to react to someone else yawning as part of a contagious act, and to cool the brain.

When we are tired or bored, our breathing tends to slow down. This dip in our breathing speed results in less oxygen in our blood. One of the main theories about yawning is that it is an involuntary act to bring more oxygen into the blood and move more carbon dioxide out of the blood. According to the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Georgia, “Dying gasps, deep breathing, yawns and sighs which are generally considered as respiratory acts, markedly increase venous return. In the presence of cardiac arrest, dying gasps pump blood through the lungs and temporarily provide blood flow to the vital areas, the central nervous system and heart. Effective net pressure as great as 50 mmHg in the pulmonary artery, 50 mmHg in the coronary arteries and 40 mmHg in the central nervous system arteries were created by dying gasps in dogs where cardiac action had ceased” (R. Woodbury, B. Abretj). Thus, yawning can be a key ingredient to expanded blood flow, combined with stretching. Excessive yawning can be a sign of a serious medical condition related to blood flow.

Another theory states that yawning is an act of stretching the lungs and lung tissue. Though stretching and yawning go hand in hand, yawning might be a type of stretch itself. This stretch acts as a way to flex our muscles and joints, increase our heart rate, and become more awake. Through this simple stretch, significant benefits are realized (“Why Do I Yawn?”).

Yet another idea is that yawning lubricates the lungs. According to Everyday Mysteries, “By yawning, we help distribute surfactant (wetting agent) to coat the alveoli (tiny air sacs) in the lungs. Generally speaking, we cannot yawn on command. It is theorized that yawning is a semi-voluntary action and partly a reflex controlled by neurotransmitters in the hypothalamus of the brain” (“Why Do We Yawn?”). Some scientists even theorize that without yawning, our lungs would collapse. Yawning possibly is a lifesaver.

As we know, yawning is contagious. Yawning is also a part of a reflex action. As Live Science points out, “Human beings are highly social and suggestible; we watch each other and emulate one another. In one yawning study, scientists found that applying cold packs to the subjects’ heads almost eliminated contagious yawning. Nasal breathing, which also promotes brain cooling, had

a similar effect” (Cicetti, Fred). So, even though yawning is highly contagious, this reflex action can be lessened or done away by routine solutions.

Lastly, there is a theory that yawning is done to cool the brain. Live Science states that, “In a recent paper published in the Journal of Medical Hypotheses, scientists Gary Hack of the University of Maryland and Andrew Gallup of Princeton University wrote that, during yawning, the sinuses act like bellows to cool off the brain. If you suffer from sinus congestion, you might yawn more” (Cicetti, Fred). Like a computer overheating, our brain often needs to cool down, and yawning is one thing that counteracts the heat of the brain.

Yawning seems like a simple act. Yet, there are many theories about why we yawn: to have more oxygen in the blood and to have more carbon dioxide out of the blood when we have slow breathing, to stretch our lungs and lung tissue, to distribute surfactant to lubricate the lungs, to react to something that is contagious, and to cool down our brain.

Works Cited

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Example 2: Coping with a Breakup

Sometimes it happens: a person dearest to you suddenly says, “We cannot be together anymore.” You see him or her gather things, shut the door, and your mind goes numb. A huge part of your life, a huge piece of yourself is gone, and while your brain is stalled, desperately trying to realize the new situation and keep to the ground that is quickly shattering under your feet, deep inside your chest you somehow feel: this is real, and this is forever.

Breakups are painful. Unlike many people believe, it is painful for the both sides: the dumper, if he or she truly loved you for a period of time, feels probably the same pain as you do. It is just that when he or she finally decides to leave you, they are often already past the shock and grief. As for the dumpee, it is only the beginning. And, unlike many Internet articles suggest, there is no quick way to deal with the pain; there is no shortcut, no magic pill that would help the dumpee suddenly wake up and feel alright. A breakup is a loss, and as in case of any loss, there will be grief and all the circles of hell.

In fact, there are going to be four of these circles, and then the exit from hell. The four circles, or stages of mourning are denial, anger, bargaining, and depression; the exit is acceptance, but we will talk about it later.

Denial is the reaction of your psyche aimed at protecting your personality from the incredible intensity of the initial post-breakup emotions. Denial can last for minutes or days, depending on what kind of person you are. Sometimes (although it is a pathology, and not common or typical) denial can last for decades: in fact, as well as each of the other stages. When in the denial stage, a dumpee often believes his/her ex has made a mistake, got confused, and will eventually realize it and return. After this usually comes anger: “How could he/she do this to me?” Many people find it difficult or even impossible to feel anger towards a person they held so dear, and instead direct this anger towards themselves, or try to choke it out somehow. It is important to let yourself feel anger: write hateful emails, tear up all your ex’s photos to pieces, break contact with him or her (and usually a dumpee tries to maintain contact with an ex during the denial stage), and so on. This anger is the result of frustration caused by a sudden breakup, and is natural; during this stage, it is important to let anger out, but in a way that will not harm other people physically or emotionally. Next comes bargaining: a dumpee hopes the relationship can be restored, and starts the attempts to return to their ex. And then there comes depression: a period of deep sadness, reflection, analysis of the mistakes made by both partners, tears, and isolation. During this period, it is important to not try to shove away the negative feelings with alcohol, drugs, rebound relationships, or in any other way, but feel this deep melancholy, and stay in it while it lasts. And finally, as a way out of hell, there comes acceptance. This is also a part of the grieving process, but compared to the previous four, it brings a person hope instead of suffering. Not the hope for reconciliation with an ex, but the hope—or better said, knowledge—that a dumpee can make it alone. Acceptance is the period of letting go, when one realizes that nothing can be fixed, nothing from the past is coming back, so he or she learns to live out his or her own life, and learns to understand and enjoy themselves and his or her life (Livestrong.com). Acceptance cannot be rushed; it comes only if the previous stages of grief have been passed completely—this is why it is crucial that one does not try to skip any of the stages.

All this does not mean, however, that one needs to go through the grieving process alone. It is natural during this period to feel isolated, or even to try isolate oneself. At the same time, there are many people around who can make dealing with the breakup easier; reaching out to good friends or family members is a helpful and wise first step in the recovery process—especially if any of them had gone through the same hardships before. It is crucial that one can trust these people, and that they are fully over their broken relationships—otherwise, a dumpee’s negativity can only be refueled. A supporting person must be able to listen to a dumpee without judging, criticizing, giving advice, and so on. If all of one’s friendships are connected to an ex, it is recommended to see a counselor or a psychotherapist who will help the dumpee get through the grieving process without getting stuck in each of the phases. Making new friendships, or joining a support group of people who have found themselves in the same situation can also help.

Interests clubs, lectures, community activities, and so on are also an alternative to staying alone 24/7 and rummaging in one's broken feelings (HelpGuide.org).

It is also important that a person takes good care of themselves. It is easy to put one's hands down, start ignoring one's own needs, and float with the river of sadness. However, this—along with trying to ignore or suppress one's negative feelings—is a part of what holds recovery back. Therefore, during the period of grief, it is important to eat healthy food, exercise, have enough sleep, and avoid unnecessary stress (HelpGuide.org).

Breakups are never easy. Sometimes it takes a person years to get fully over someone who dumped them, and it depends not only on psychic constitution, so to say, but also on how (and whether) this person had passed all the five stages of the grieving process. This process includes denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, and it is important that each of these stages is completely realized, felt, and lived through. Only in this case can one can fully recover and become able to build new, stronger, and more satisfying relationships.

Works Cited

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