

## Sample Student Persuasive Essay

### Leave Reality up to Real Life

During the past few years, an entirely new element has been introduced to television. It has stormed the industry, and has loyal watchers hooked. The subjects range from survival, to true love, and even deception. It's reality television, and the public loves it. The original reality show to storm the networks was "Survivor", a show that was intended to give us a look at "real people" in an extraordinary situation. The public ate it up because it was allowed them to relate to an industry that was typically far removed from their lives. The irony of it is the fact that these so called reality shows are the most far removed media from reality.

I remember sitting at my computer five years ago, and the television was on. My friends were watching this new show called "Survivor". The thought occurred to me what a strange idea it was, to have this show that follows people so closely. It took a few more episodes for me to really be interested. I liked the idea that there something different on, something to challenge the norm. It offered an alternative to the same old droll that filled television. A show about castaways spawned a show about watching people living together in a house, people racing around the world, and people trying to fall in love. Again, all of these ideas were fresh and new, and attracted the attention of the masses. The unfortunate eventuality of the masses though, is that they bore easy. Producers scrambled to freshen the already dying gimmick. What better way to spruce things up than to demoralize them? Suddenly, these shows focused on the low, uncaring, and selfish aspects of human behavior. "The Amazing Race" went from a show about an honest race for prize money to focusing on how the contestants could best deceive everyone else. The active participants of these shows were actively persuaded to liven things up by adding lies, deception, and jealousy into the mix. How can the public complain; they are the reason it happened.

The sad and simple fact is that the viewing public is the root of the downfall of primetime television. Society demands everything to an extreme. With viewers having an attention span similar to that of a five year old, it's not surprising that the television

industry is in its own battle to have the raciest show. People bore easily, ratings die off, and the stations jump at every opportunity to shock and dismay the public week after week. Sex, lies, deception, money, and danger are the basic elements for “good” television. During the day, the world protests about the fall of manners, morals, and basic standards, but spend their nights watching shows of corruption. It cannot be both ways; either accept that society is falling, or stop watching the shows.

The funniest thing about the entire craze of reality T.V. is that it is an oxymoron. The entire reasoning for television series’ and late night shows is that they are supposed to be separate of reality. Entertainment, for the most part, is supposed to be an escape from the every day, a venture out of reality. Why would society be attracted to something that would lead them right into what they are trying to escape from? The very term “reality” is insulting as well. Who do we know that was stranded on a desert island, or locked in a house for six weeks? How often do people we know date sixteen guys or girls at once to decide who is best? Honestly, the term “reality television” is a joke. It is the farthest thing from reality. Laying a label to it such as that may mentally allow us to relate easier to the shows, and that was the intent of the people producing the shows. The issue that also arises is that we compare our lives to that of what we see on T.V. The impressionable of this world (especially the young) begin to wonder what is wrong with them because they are not like the “real” people on T.V. Who wants to live in that reality?

The hype of reality television is disturbing. When it first premiered, its fresh aspect spiked my interest. Quickly, I saw it for what it really was. Hype created through the sacrifice of people’s morals and integrity. In these shows, people feed off the despair and mistreatment of others. Their far-reaching effects will begin to show in our society. This produced, entertainment driven “reality” has skewed what reality really is. As a society, we really need to assess what kind of reality we live in that allows us to think that this is entertaining.