Prompt 1

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

Being unwilling to change is often seen as a limitation. For example, a common accusation people often make in arguments is that the other person refuses to even consider taking new positions on issues. But being consistent is not always a bad thing. In fact, firmly supporting a position or point of view shows that one is stable and constant and does not change one's position whenever circumstances change. This consistency is far more important than a willingness to adjust one's thinking.

Assignment: Is it more important to remain consistent than to change one's mind when circumstances change? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

Prompt 2

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

Getting people to work well in teams is crucial to accomplishing ambitious goals. Teams work a kind of magic in developing important ideas and getting hard work done, and they give us the close human contact and shared purpose that we all need. But there’s a dark side to teams too: group identity can be too powerful. The desire to be an accepted member of a group can prevent individuals from forming their own moral judgments.

Adapted from Peter S. Temes, *The Power of Purpose*

Assignment: Are teams or groups beneficial for individuals, or does group membership prevent individuals from forming their own moral judgments? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

Prompt 3

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

Modern society values convenience. From disposable napkins to the personal computer, from fast-food restaurants to cell phones, it seems that nearly everything we buy or use has been designed to maximize convenience. Unfortunately, instead of saving time and energy and minimizing frustration, many of the so-called conveniences in our lives turn out to be nuisances or have a negative impact on our health, the environment, or our emotional well-being.

Assignment: Does society place too much value on convenience? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

Prompt 4

Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.

When we go shopping, most of us do not think about the impact our spending has on other people. However, if we buy products from companies or individuals that mistreat their employees or the environment, or that otherwise do harm, we indirectly approve or even encourage such behavior. On the other hand, it may be unrealistic to assume that anything would prevent people from buying a good product at the right price.

Assignment: Do consumers have a responsibility to purchase goods only from companies and people whose actions are beneficial to others? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations