Sample Student

Dr. Sparks

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English 1B Sample Introduction and analysis

**Where Sweatshops Are a Dream** By [NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/opinion/editorialsandoped/oped/columnists/nicholasdkristof/index.html?inline=nyt-per) January 14, 2009

Before Barack Obama and his team act on their talk about “labor standards,” I’d like to offer them a tour of the vast garbage dump here in Phnom Penh. This is a Dante-like vision of hell. It’s a mountain of festering refuse, a half-hour hike across, emitting clouds of smoke from subterranean fires. The miasma of toxic stink leaves you gasping, breezes batter you with filth, and even the rats look forlorn. Then the smoke parts and you come across a child ambling barefoot, searching for old plastic cups that recyclers will buy for five cents a pound. Many families actually live in shacks on this smoking garbage. Mr. Obama and the Democrats who favor labor standards in trade agreements mean well, for they intend to fight back at oppressive sweatshops abroad. But while it shocks Americans to hear it, the central challenge in the poorest countries is not that sweatshops exploit too many people, but that they don’t exploit enough.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/15/opinion/15kristof.html?_r=1&hp>

I believe the introduction pasted in above is good for several reasons. First, it immediately addresses the “So what?” and “Who cares?” questions in the reader’s mind by referring to an important political issue that was under discussion at the highest levels when it was written: labor standards in a period of high unemployment. Of course, not everyone cares about labor standards in other countries, but those who do would be drawn in initially by the title, and then by the news that the Obama administration’s wrangling with the issue. That’s the “kairos.”

I also think the vivid descriptive details would draw in readers, especially paired with the little video clip on the Web. Even in the print version, though, Kristof is painting a picture with his words that creates a strong pathos appeal (again, for people who would read a story about sweatshops).

Finally, Kristof echoes the paradox in the title in the last paragraph. His “they say” part in that paragraph sets up the opposing view: most people think sweatshops are awful. Kristof piques the interest of this group by suggesting that there’s another way to see them. Of course, those who might think of Kristof as a liberal bleeding heart type might be intrigued, too, because this isn’t the line of argument you’d expect from such a person. He also bolsters his ethos by giving an eye-witness account: the “I’ve-been-there-and-you-haven’t” strategy.