6ᵗʰ Grade Expository: Keeping the Community Clean

Task Prompt: Write an argumentative essay in which you give your opinion about whether the school should agree to clean a section of a highway or host a technology recycling day as your school's community service project. Make sure you clearly state your opinion and write several paragraphs supporting your opinion with reasons and details from the sources.

Clean up your act!

When deciding on what community service project to focus on, you must consider the impact of each choice and the long-term effects. Therefore, I believe that our school should host a technology recycling day, rather than a highway cleanup. I believe this because of littering of technology's impact, the amount of technology littered, and the popularity of the subject.

Technology in our country is getting more and more popular every day. From a teenager getting their first phone, to an adult getting their first job, which requires a computer, technology is getting more important in our daily lives. And it is developing. Almost every year, people await the new version of a phone by Apple, or the latest advancement in a computer Microsoft has made. But what is the lasting impact that comes from these new developments? One thing that these developments cause is difficulty in recycling. Because of these new and improved versions of computers, phones, and other electronic devices, people are throwing away old devices, such as large and bulky computer monitors, or flip-phones. This causes problems when recycling materials used in these computers. For example, old computers used CRTs, which are glass-based materials that are also known as cathode ray tubes. Computers these days don't use CRTs, so recycling plants can't refurbish these materials to create old computers. If a recycling plant can't safely recycle these objects, then the high lead content within them can become dangerous to the environment. As written in Source #3, "If crushed and put into landfills, the lead from CRTs could seep into groundwater and rivers, contaminating the water supply." This can be harmful to humans and animals. On highways, litter on the ground may look ugly to humans and be harmful to animals, but if water supply is contaminated, it can have terrible effects on humans and animals alike. However, if our school organizes a computer drop-off event, we can take the computers to companies like RePC to refurbish the old computer parts. This way, lead poisoning or other harmful effects from these computers can be prevented.

Technology has become an extremely important part of our country, and very many companies are using that to their advantage and creating very high-tech devices that become very popular. But what about the previous versions of these devices? People will just buy the new version, and will no longer

want the old one. "It's better for the planet if we keep using an electronic for as long as it keeps working," Barbara Kyle, the national coordinator of the Electronics TakeBack Coalition says. "But many times, we stop using it even though it still works, because we got a newer product." With new developments every day, the amount of electronics being recycled is growing larger and larger. This isn't good for the environment. If we don't take action, the harmful effects of these computers and other devices will become more common, and the environment, humans, and animals will be harmed. Currently, there are many acts to stop highway littering, and the amount of litter is becoming smaller. However, the amount of electronics being recycled is just getting larger.

Despite the fact that the amount of electronics being recycled is very large, most people seem to think that the problem is very small, or even not there at all. Many people are ignorant to the fact that their old computer monitor can have bad effects on their local water supply or can pollute the earth or air. Because of this, people continue to throw out their devices without thinking about the effects or taking action upon them. Lots of people have heard of the Adopt-a-Highway program. You can see signs for it on almost every highway you drive on. However, the advertisements for recycling electronics are not very common. In 2013, only half of the states in the U.S. had passed laws about recycling and disposing of electronics. In 1965, President Johnson passed the Highway Beautification Act, which was very successful in helping to clean up highways. Many people and organizations have helped deal with litter on the highway. Not too many have helped re purpose old electronics. That is why our school should change that and help stop environmental impacts caused by the littering of old electronics.

Both littering on the highway and improper recycling of old electronics are terrible problems that our country faces. However, not many people know about the impact of littering technology, or the amount of technology littered, or even that it is a problem at all! That is why our school should host a technology recycling day, rather than a highway cleanup.