

Question: Is it important to our society, its history and culture, to preserve musical and dance performances, remnants or records of human ingenuity or craftsmanship, photographs and works of art or literature?

(Untitled)

A society's history and culture are very important things and should be preserved and protected from the dangers that threaten them. History and culture are important things to be preserved because they not only tell about the society and how they lived, but they also show society's progress through time.

To preserve the history and culture of a society is important because objects from the past tell us how our society survived and lived long ago. Patrick McGeehan wrote an article pertaining to an old tunnel blocking the construction of a new subway tunnel underneath Battery Park in New York City. This old tunnel is believed to be as old as the Revolutionary War and city officials think that the contents of the tunnel will be able to tell us about our society while being under British control. The preservation of this tunnel and its contents could potentially reveal to us new things that are not known already about life in that time period.

Saving a society's history and culture is no different than saving your family's history and culture. Most families, including my own, save things such as pictures, projects, toys, and heirlooms in order to look back on them and remember how things used to be for us. The memories brought back from these objects are priceless, and I believe that the items from a society's history and culture are also priceless for the same reason.

Saving a society's history and culture not only teaches us about the society in the past, but it shows us how our society has progressed through the years. In the music scene, it is obvious that the effect of New Orleans music has made a tremendous impact on what we listen to today (Pareles). New Orleans music has impacted our music today by starting to play new things that eventually developed into all music that our society listens to. As hurricanes constantly threaten the history of music in New Orleans, measures must be taken in order to preserve this treasured past. Music stemming from New Orleans comes from many cultures, and in order to remember this important fact, the musical history must be preserved or protected by such things as hurricanes.

Our history and culture's roots go deep and in order to properly remember and credit our past, these objects must be preserved. Without these things to remind us of our society's history, we will forget where we came from and ultimately what we stand for. Our past holds this important concept together, and its preservation is of the utmost importance.

Observations

Strengths: *The writer focuses effectively, stating his thesis in the last sentence of the introduction. He has organized clearly, with a separate paragraph developing each point as introduced in the thesis—that saving our history and culture (1) teaches us “how our society lived and survived” and (2) “shows us how our society has progressed through the years.” Between these paragraphs, the writer develops a paragraph comparing saving our society’s past to a family’s saving photographs, toys, and heirlooms. Each paragraph is clearly related to the thesis. He writes a separate conclusion, adding the insight that without knowledge of our past, we will forget “what we stand for.” The style is generally clear, with effective transitions (note the beginning of the fourth paragraph, where the writer restates the previous point in the process of moving to the next point). There are few mechanical errors. The writer cites two readings, making a direct reference to the author of the first (“Patrick McGeehan wrote an article pertaining to an old tunnel”) and citing the author of the second parenthetically. The writer does well to state his points in his own words before adding a reference to the reading. His essay includes original ideas (in the middle body paragraph and in the conclusion) and is not a mere patchwork of quotations or paraphrases from the sources. The essay demonstrates basic mastery and received a “4.”*

Weaknesses: *Development is weak. The writer has not included any concrete details to develop the general ideas. The middle paragraph about a family's preserving its history might have included examples from the writer's own family. Perhaps he has his grandfather's gold pocket watch, for example, which he will pass along to his son, or he might have the family bible, with marriages and births and deaths duly recorded. Examples from personal experience can be as effective in the Part II essay as in the Part I essay. Another way of developing in detail is to quote specific information from a source, as this writer might have done to explain what was discovered near the subway tunnel. He might have written the following, for example: "Among the items found around the wall are a well-preserved half-penny coin dated 1744 and shards of smoking pipes and Delft pottery," writes McGeehan. But the writer fails to use the sources as effectively as he might have. In fact, he mistakenly refers to "an old tunnel," although it was in fact a wall, not a tunnel, that was discovered underground. Certain sentences are vague or confusing (e.g., "New Orleans music has impacted our music today by starting to play new things that eventually developed into all music that our society listens to."). He writes illogically that "musical history must be preserved or protected by such things as hurricanes." He writes "heirlums" rather than "heirlooms" and "upmost" rather than "utmost."*