

Directions: Read the essay. Then answer the questions.

The Skinny Dream is a Big Fat Lie

Our misplaced cultural values when it comes to physical appearance—that everyone ought to be young, thin and gorgeous— has a negative impact on kids just coming of age. These values are primarily conveyed to kids through either the media (and, consequently, through their peers) and by their parents.

Kids are becoming aware of celebrities at an increasingly young age. Celebrities are usually very attractive, very popular, and garner a ton of attention. To a young person with limited experience of the world, it can seem as if anyone who isn't somebody (i.e., a celebrity) is nobody, and of course kids want to grow up to be somebody. They see blaze a trail to being somebody by emulating the physical appearances of celebrities, without realizing what is beneath the (often airbrushed) surface of their lives, resulting in kids with poor body image and sometimes life-threatening eating disorders. Case in point, both Lady Gaga and Snooki have both suffered from eating disorders.

Parents can either compound this problem by thinking too much of celebrities themselves, or by passing on their own unhealthy body image and weight obsessions, either consciously or unconsciously, to their kids. Parents who are constantly worried about their weight to the extent that they fail to enjoy a well-rounded life, are sending a message to their children that what your body looks like is more important than your health, how you feel, how you present yourself, and other qualities that are rarely featured in magazines. Some parents aren't concerned about their own body image, they are concerned about their children's; They worry that their children are or will be overweight, and so they introduce unhealthy and unnecessary anxieties in them. Dr. Paul Robinson, who specializes in adolescents with body image issues, said in a recent interview in Time magazine that the parents of over half of his patients fall into one of these two categories.

What's the solution? We need to shift our values away from gorgeous celebrities and onto things that don't have body image attached to them at all, things like science and art and literature; we need to turn our kids' focus towards eating for good health, not body image, and encourage them to develop their brains and natural gifts, not their figures.



Name _____ **Evaluating Arguments**

1. What is the author's claim? _____

2. List the reasons and evidence the author offers to support her claim. If not all reasons have supporting evidence, indicate that.

REASON #1: _____

EVIDENCE: _____

REASON #2: _____

EVIDENCE: _____

3. Which of the following does the author use to support her claim?

- A. The author mentions research.
- B. The author appeals to the reader's emotions.
- C. The author uses the bandwagon technique (everyone else believes this so you should too).
- D. The author's tone makes her seem believable and trustworthy.
- E. The author quotes experts.
- F. The author includes credible data.
- G. The author includes real world examples.