The whole world has come to a standstill, and the reason is the pandemic COVID-19. All of a sudden, it seems we are a part of a horror movie. The villainous coronavirus is killing thousands of people, and we are feeling helpless. It has turned our lives upside down. Even in our dreams, we could not have imagined ourselves confined to our homes, with no outings and unable to meet our friends and relatives.

Reasonably, the situation has given us a chance to look at things differently. In the beginning, this lockdown was considered as holidays by some children, like me. Once extended, it has made us realize the value of attending schools. We appreciate the hard work of our teachers who are trying their best to teach us through online classes and providing us with study material. Teachers are not leaving any stone unturned so that we do not waste our precious time sitting idle. Although initially taking online classes was a challenge for them, they have quickly adapted so that our academic path does not get affected. This has taught us never to run away from challenges when life throws them upon us and, to try to adapt according to the situation.

These hard times are teaching us the value of everyday food items like fruits, vegetables, and groceries in our lives. They have become so valuable that nowadays they are not readily available. We are learning to manage ourselves with limited resources. We have learned to respect our farmers and the vendors who are bringing these essentials to our doorsteps. We have realized that we should never waste food because many people are unable to have even a single meal during this lockdown period. It has also taught us life beyond junk food as now we know that delicious food can be cooked at home too. We have become more alert about personal hygiene and cleanliness.

The lockdown has also made us appreciate our parents, who usually work day and night to fulfill our reasonable (and unreasonable) demands and never complain. Spending more time with them gave us an opportunity to understand them and to learn what quality time
is. Life is about not only studies, TV, and games. It is about sharing and standing with each other during any phase of life. We have also got a chance to know about our parent’s childhood days, watching Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc. playing games like Ludo. Parents have also taught us the value of money, and how necessary it is to save money for rainy days. We have learnt that it is our moral duty to stand by our employees in offices and factories and domestic help because they are the people who make our life worth living.

The current situation has made us value the organizations who keep working day and night to make our life easy and smooth. We should be thankful to our government and police officers who are trying to make people follow the rules of social distancing. We should also be grateful to health workers who are putting their lives in danger to save thousands of lives.

Lockdown is giving us many lessons about life. We have learnt to handle difficulties with a positive mind, and I hope these lessons remain with us throughout life. There is an end to every nightmare, and this one shall end soon.
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: Stronger together and a new word for us: Solidarity

“When I is replaced by We, even Illness becomes Wellness.”… Malcolm

Solidarity is a commonly used word but has today gained a real recognition, meaning, and significance as the globe has endorsed ‘solidarity’ as the foremost and vital weapon in the battle to safeguard humanity. This has been brought to our conscience through a message given by Dr. Tedros Adhanom, the Director-General of WHO, who has made ‘solidarity’ a constant message of the global public health response to COVID-19 pandemic.

It is clear that strength lies in unity, and ‘Unity is Strength.’ Our unified objectives, sympathies, and actions tie us together as one with the strings of solidarity, while striking the chords of unity, cooperation, and unanimity.

The world is tussling with an issue of large scale and massive human impact, the pandemic of COVID-19. Antonio Guterres, the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations also said, in an interview, “COVID-19 is above all a human crisis with severe health and socio-economic consequences.” This virus is unexpected in our lifetime and requires an unmatched response. Once the battle is over, there will be ample time to look back and completely understand how it emerged, evolved, and caused devastation in our entity. That time has not come yet. Now is the time when the globe is in the thick of health, and when the international community must unite in its common struggle with solidarity to combat this virus and its shattering consequences.

The WHO is working in solidarity with many countries to implement a comprehensive approach to educate, empower, and engage communities to slow down transmission.
It is securing lives and buying time for the development of vaccines and treatments. An international large-scale study is in place to generate reliable data to show which treatments are the most effective. The WHO has called it ‘Solidarity Trial.’

Although political borders have been closed, scientists are creating a global collaboration unlike any other in history. Several experts in so many nations are focusing simultaneously on a single topic with great urgency.

Another example is the lockdown followed by the respectable citizens like faithful teammates following the instructions of the government with loyalty. In turn, all doctors, healthcare workers, and civil workers have been fearless warriors working persistently round the clock for the good of the world.

The globe is worth fighting for to secure such an invaluable jewel: humankind.

We are in the midst of unpleasant circumstances of the most serious kind. We have before us long months of struggle. It is the necessity to move forward with the spirit of harmony to fight this terrible catalog of human sufferings. ‘Let us stand in solidarity, not to a specific country, race, or religion but rather to humanity.’

‘United we stand, divided we fall.’

The little poetess inside me want to sum up my thoughts with the following piece of poetry:

Alone we are droplets, together an ocean,  
when we drink unity’s potion.  
Alone we are bricks, together a building, 
and so ourselves we are shielding.  
Alone we are branches, together a tree,  
grown with the seeds of solidarity.  
Alone we are people, together a team,  
with cooperation supreme.  
Alone we are humans, together humanity  
standing together with unity and unanimity.
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: Science and health: what should we change to be more resilient?

“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs, but not every man’s greed.”
- MAHATMA GANDHI

I begin using this opportunity to thank from the bottom of my heart to all essential service providers who are contributing selflessly in difficult times.

We are in a panic situation, and therefore cannot understand its solutions, but if we go by the doctor’s advice, they are simple to follow. Washing hands frequently at least for twenty seconds, staying clean and hygienic, use of handkerchief while sneezing and yawning, self-isolation and quarantine, and maintaining the social distancing are some of them.

Changed mindsets is what I wish to see after a year of COVID-19 so that if we face any other threat, we can reduce its outbreak. This also goes for other potential threats we face due to our resource-centric lifestyles, like pollution and global warming.

We must understand the problems clearly and change our mindsets so that we can save the whole humanity and our planet. For this not only India, but also the whole world has to take part. We have to change our habits and make our lives healthier. Scientific education is the most important for all human beings so that they are capable in combating with such pandemic. Facilities of hospitals providing best healthcare should be affordable and accessible by all. States and national governments should have planned for such crisis. The WHO should be empowered to deal with forthcoming crisis in advance.

Our boring life should change to active by getting awareness on better health practices. We should opt for nutritious food, daily exercise, practicing sports, among other practices. We should also be prepared for a disaster like earthquakes or cyclones. Essential service providers should be available all the time. Food and livelihoods have become challenging.
especially for the most vulnerable to get. Police should be sensitized and modernized so that they can help in such a situation. This should be the part of advanced planning.

Recently, standard migrant workers walked barefoot, with their families, including small children, for hundreds of kilometers. People are doing this because they are afraid. We should be well prepared to help them in such an immediate crisis as well.

Superstition has become a pain in the neck. People think that science is against their religion, and fear is a part of faith. This is not true. Science is against the superstition. For example, a policeman hand was chopped off in a brutal attack for being stopped at a barricade during the lockdown. His hand was reattached by the doctors at a hospital after a seven-and-a-half hour surgery on the same day.

Today, science makes possible hearts and liver transplants, which has increased the life span of people. We need even more advances in healthcare. Finally, due to the lockdown, the environment is recovering, the air is getting cleaned and we can see more stars in the night sky. Animals take over the streets and several can be seen strolling.

Above all, one should respect ‘**HUMANE IN HUMANS**’.
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: Culture and crafts: how to be creative when staying at home.

The coronavirus pandemic has affected education systems worldwide, leading to closure of schools and universities and impacting nearly two billion learners.

In India too, the government closed the schools.

In some cases, the schools have also mass promoted the students without conducting exams. This is the time in which the students get opportunities of doing something new and creative that would be helpful to face the pandemic COVID-19. We should know the history of Indian culture and heritage by reading holy books such as Ramayana, Mahabharata, and others. Another insightful book is Chanakyaneeti, which tells us how to live life differently and face difficult situations. The famous book, ‘Inspired Talks’ by Hindu saint Swami Vivekananda is remarkable. Whichever hobby one has, whether it is singing, cooking, and painting, one can enhance it. Children can also complete online courses of many subjects by using ICTs. Students can also read newspapers and books for improving their general knowledge, vocabulary, speaking, and writing skills; play brain games, that can be played in mobile phones to increase IQ level.

This is the time to keep ourselves and others safe and at the same time engaged.

Students should also contribute to the national health mission in their own small ways. Many young students have innovated producing sanitizers, face shields and masks by using the resources available at home. This is the best example of young warriors helping the nation to fight against the pandemic.

Our culture is full of empathy and sympathy towards society. Young students are creative- and full of enthusiasm. If such creativity in crafts is guided well, students can do wonders.

This lockdown is something the present generation would not have thought of.
So, taking this situation positively everyone has an opportunity to do something different. Students can help the poor people by feeding them and also the stray animals around. Students can practice yoga and meditation to get mental peace and enhance their immunity. Students can also join online webinars and meetings organized by UNESCO and ATAL labs. During this situation students can share their creative work with others using online platforms.

Many students do not have access to technology and without they are unable to participate in online activities. This is a major problem and our government should think of solving them and prepare us well for any future disasters. The poor and vulnerable have problem of getting food for the day and it is difficult for them to think of Culture and Crafts online based competitions.

Indian culture is significant and specially the Ayurveda medicines. The department of Ayush is running the advertisements and we should watch and follow the messages to keep our immunity strong during the outbreak especially.

At last, I would like to convey a message to all my dear brothers and sisters of India to be creative, positive, and innovative, and learn as much as possible from available resources to pass this situation of the pandemic positively.
“We are not only fighting an epidemic but are also fighting an infodemic”, said the Director-General of the World Health Organization. Social media platforms, like YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or WhatsApp are used to spread and share information. The info reaches us like a wildfire. These platforms serve as useful means of communication for real and accurate information, and not for the fake.

In the current COVID-19 situation, when people are restrained physically, the internet penetration has increased exponentially. Fighting an unknown, unseen enemy, with no definite cure in sight, lots of misinformation and disinformation is being circulated on the internet. The accidental spread of misinformation is the menace and causes fear amongst the people. The motive of such posts may be simply to manipulate people’s minds and create biases. Some even see this pandemic as an opportunity to get rich by creating a brand on a false cornerstone, such as the one claiming that the colloidal silver being sold by him would cure the novel coronavirus. The truth is that the colloidal silver is not even safe for the human body! In this pandemic, miscreants play with people's hopes looking for a cure and use social media to propagate their fake remedies and fool the naive ones into buying them.

During this period, thousands of migrant laborers came on roads and walked down long distances to their home in different states, just under the influence of fake news about India’s lockdown being extended for another three months. Vulnerable population tends to get into a panic mode, which is the worst thing in the face of a public health crisis. Actions taken in stress and haste can be life threatening not just for ourselves, but also for society at large.

How do we overcome this wildfire of disinformation? Most important is to remember that we can only get infected by coming in contact with a COVID-19 carrier or touching any
contaminated surface but we can indeed be scared to death by coming in contact with rumours. Getting panicky not only breaks us down mentally but also weakens our immune system. We should calm our minds and use our brains, to think straight and sensibly and not be easily tricked. We should check the validity and the source of origin before trusting any news. This can be done by googling the references and news images. If it does not show up or show up differently, we will know it is a fake news. If the news is a bit uncanny or debatable and we are unsure about its authenticity, then we should not forward it. As the virus needs a host to spread it from person to person, a piece of fake news similarly, if we refuse to carry it forward, it will die its death. On both fronts, be it the virus or false information online, what is needed is a conscious change in human behaviour.

Most governments in the world are collaborating and dealing strictly with all false information. Many arrests have happened for posting fake news about COVID-19 on WhatsApp. The Aarogya Setu App is an outstanding initiative by the Indian government. It gives not only real-time authentic news but also debunks false information. Let us all download and use this official application and resolve to stay healthy and well informed at all times. Not everything we find online is right, but some real information is that we should stay home and stay safe.
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: The current crisis is showing the best and the worst of humanity. Will a new form of solidarity emerge at the end of the tunnel or do you think on the contrary that previous trends of the last few years (e.g. increasing nationalisms) will be enhanced?

“Let us stand in solidarity; not to a specific country, race or religion but rather to humanity.” David Vox

The unprecedented global emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic has jolted our lives into jitter. Strange as it seems that we the ‘Humans’, mightiest of all creatures who keep on hoarding to fashion our futures, are now into the submission of a microscopic enemy making everything frozen still. Since staying positive or negative is all a matter of our attitude, seeking a ray of hope at the end of a dark tunnel, the corona pandemic has taught us various lessons to learn and implement in the future.

Contrary to the shackles of race, country, class or religion in which we keep ourselves entangled, this unbiased corona-kind has detangled us from all the above restraints and made us realize that wherever far we go, we humans will always remain connected to each other-biologically, physically and chemically. This is entirely in accord with the wordings of Swami Vivekananda, a Spiritual Master of 19th century who said, “There exists a unity in variety. Mind, matter, spirit-are all one”. Today the whole world seems to be united. Cutting across all the people-made boundaries, nations have mobilized to support each other, distributing every possible humanitarian aid across the globe to combat such a global crisis. Today every religion, and every God, all stand united in these tough times. Every individual is fighting as a soldier, armed with humanity, safeguarding the lives of humankind.

Whether clapping hands as a gesture of thanksgiving to the helping workers or lighting lanterns or diyas as a practice of social strengthening exercise, every nation is doing their part to spread solidarity among its citizens. The countless stories of humanity and generosity of all the volunteers distributing meals, essential medical supplies to the needy and poor are awe-inspiring. The precautionary measures of staying home and social distancing...
has transcended ourselves from thinking words like ‘I,’ or ‘Me,’ to ‘We’ and ‘Us’. Sooner rather than later, we have understood the power of togetherness.

Nature is repairing due to deceased pollution. Rivers are clearing, birds are chirping and flowers are blooming. All this puts me into self-interrogation. It makes me introspect that are not we the real viruses to this beautiful earth we are gifted with? Ruining it now and then. Just as sometimes a vaccination is required to cure ourselves, this deadly virus has given a perfect time to meditate and bring control to our self-centered lives. It has also made us realize the significance of living in harmony with nature that we are ought to respect and protect. We are now healing the world to bring back the essence of its lost beauty and restore its health.

Since optimism is a more natural to navigate away from sadness and eases pain and grief, let us squeeze the lemons of coronavirus and turn into lemonade to seek better days that are on its way to come.

To all the lives sacrificed in this pandemic, let us pay tribute to them and pledge to be responsible citizens towards our mother earth, making this world a better place to live in.

Just as different streams of water unite into a giant ocean, every individual must join in solidarity, strengthening its power to manifolds. I am looking forward to seeing a different world of humanity that knows no division of age, wealth, caste, or creed. We leverage ourselves to more network building, make strong bonds, and steer our way for a world of beaming common humanity.

Let the light of hope, calm, and tranquility prevail!
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: Do you think that the COVID-19 pandemic will force us to redefine the quest for a better use of our natural resources? Will there be a before and an after for environmental issues? If so how?

As the former French President, François Hollande had rightly said, “The time is past when humankind thought it could selfishly draw on exhaustible resources. We know now, the world is not a commodity.”

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Category - Youth

Today, the entire world is battling with the coronavirus, which has infected more than 3 million people, claiming over 200,000 lives (as of end of April 2020), crippling economies and leaving the entire human population gripping with terror. With the theories lurking around about the origin of the disease, we may be missing the main cause of such pandemics, which has always been and will still be the uncontrollable greed of humans to exploit nature beyond its limits.

Since the beginning of environmental degradation in the 16th century through the conquest and exploitation of the Inca mines until now, we have only paved to an increase in pollution, global warming, and loss of biodiversity, deforestation and ozone depletion. This in spite of several environmental organizations, conferences, and agreements which has further led to increased carbon emissions, climate disasters like destructive heavy rains, tropical storms, and other phenomena, affecting more than 2.4 billion people in the last decade.

The United Nations Environmental Programme claimed that the outbreak was related to ecosystem and wildlife degradation, which causes transmission of the virus from wild species to humans. Scientists have claimed that the transmission of the SARS-COV-2 virus from bats is possible due to the destruction of natural landscapes, habitats, biodiversity, and deforestation, which alters animal-human interactions, reduces the health of the animal hosts compromising their immunity, disrupting the predator-prey balance and thus allowing pathogens to spread easily.
Similarly, wet markets and wildlife trade, increase epidemics as snatching animals from their habitats, surrounded by other people in crowded conditions make it easier for the virus to jump into a new host.

With the growing darkness of COVID-19 engulfing the entire world, forcing people to stay home, silencing the busiest places of the world with a wave of fear and death, there has been some ray of light on environmental issues. These include fading nitrogen dioxide levels in Spain, USA, and Italy, as well as decreased emissions by 25% in China along with improved air quality in Indian cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Jalandhar, and others, and clear waters in the Ganges. The lockdown witnessed wildlife flourishing in full throttle with birds chirping happily and the endangered Olive Ridley turtles laying eggs on the Odisha beaches being some examples.

It is unfortunate that such a pandemic that claims millions of lives is bringing such a change on the environment when we should have acted long back, which would have prevented this in the first place. Although the dark clouds of uncertainty over how long this change will persist, still lingers along with black dots like abandonment of environment programs, single-use plastics by corporations, or increasing medical waste. There is a hope for lesser rebound unlike 2008-9 crash if the efforts are taken collectively towards environmental degradation and habits developed during lockdown like reduced wastage of food and unnecessary travel are continued further.

The time has come for humans to overcome their undying thirst for power and supremacy, and utilize this opportunity to create a just operating space for humanity by investing in renewable energy resources and economic models on doughnut economics. Launching a global effort to identify different viruses in wildlife, working with communities in emerging diseases hotspots to identify risk behaviours, thus preventing outbreaks in their earliest stages and most importantly implementing protected areas, community conservancies and conservation areas for biodiversity protection is pivotal in prevention of such pandemics.

With millions of people dying of poverty and hunger, millions are shedding their blood and tears in countries like Syria fighting their war, and a dark cloud of uncertainty looming over the future of Earth.

What is the use of fighting over money, power, and supremacy when the entire human race is at stake?

The time has come to rise above such narrow predicaments of supremacy and greed, and to join hands to fight against such pandemics and blood spilling wars, taking concrete actions to protect our environment, rebuilding a new greener and much healthier world.

It is time to look forward.
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: The lockdown affected men and women equally. At home, it also forced them for instance to share household chores. Do you believe this crisis will have long-lasting consequences on gender roles and stereotypes in the country?

The 'Great lockdown' is a massive disruption in the socio-economic history of India in its war against the fatal COVID-19 pandemic that has been ubiquitous in its expansion.

Men, women, children and the aged – all have been vulnerable with an equal degree to the dismay of this vicious invisible microorganism. The world has come to a standstill with a bleak possibility of any recovery shortly from the repercussions of this massive anomaly.

Let us look at the gender nomenclature from an anthropological perspective. Ever since the commencement of our genealogical evolution and subsequent diversion from the ape ancestry, *homo sapiens* evolved into beings with superior physical capabilities, and they began to identify the concept of masculinity and femininity. Eventually, the household duties were also classified—men assumed the responsibility of hunting and gathering food for the family, and women, in turn, would take care of their children. Gradually, throughout a protracted aeon, these historical assumptions began to be transformed into stereotypical notions that were stamped as gender roles as they were handed down from generation to generation. This is termed as gender priming, which led to men and women being regarded as bread-earners and housekeepers, respectively.

With this stereotyping and gender roles, emerged a sense of gender inequality, which was hardly addressed until recent years. Novel concepts in this arena emerged with the evolution of feminism, and with the emergence of the Socratic method that propagated questioning of the pre-existing beliefs. Still the notion of equality existed merely in theory.

All of a sudden, a novel coronavirus jumped from the relatively uncivilized species to human beings, with its malicious clutches. To our surprise, this vicious microorganism
barely comprehended the complex anthropogenic articulation of gender taxonomy, as it infected communities, travelled across shores, claiming numerous lives. Struck with the unprecedented lethality, leaders sought to intervene by imposing lockdowns that confined all men and all women to their houses.

This calamity shook the very foundation of self-proclaimed masculinity- the masculine fraternity was rendered unemployed by the catastrophe.

Meanwhile, the feminine homemakers were the least affected in terms of routine work, and working-women were huddled up with huge piles of documents along with huge piles of dishes! The plight was evident, as their responsibilities had been doubled when the household-help bid them adieu with a treacherous gleam.

Confined to the disturbing sight at home, men began to assume the responsibility of handling household chores: some arranged for stockpiling groceries, some took to cleaning and washing, and a few of them even assisted their partners by preparing sumptuous meals for them. Men who assumed the role of breadwinner for the family, with minimal interaction with their family members took a step forward to get involved in the family events and have a say on domestic matters – the children’s assessment reports, the shabby living room, and the cupboards and switches in need of repair. Family members are now enjoying joint dinners and televised family shows. The lockdown has indeed nucleated the disjoint family members within the solace of domestic confinement.

With a month of confinement and radically altered schedules, men have developed a sense of profound empathy for their feminine counterparts. They have realized that the power of empathizing with one another and providing assistance through sharing of duties with a redefined taxonomy of tasks would go a long way in sustaining harmonious relationships in the household. The ones who have realized the gravity of this plighted stance would incorporate a few of these chores in their working scheme permanently. Even if this does not happen, the masculine fraternity will begin to acknowledge these efforts and develop a sense of gratitude for the chores that were previously taken for granted and regarded with an unapologetic gesture.

In my opinion, the impact of this modified schedule and retention of chores by men would depend to a marked extent on the intensity of role convergence. It would also assume proportionality with the duration of the lockdown. If the lockdown prevails for long, these roles may assume permanency. This testifies the plan conspired by Nature to redefine gender roles and bring about gender equality.
Red ripe tomatoes, fresh capsicums, multi-colour chilies are dangling in the breeze; in my hanging garden, which is perfect treat for the eyes. It occupies a tiny area, just about 50 square feet of the entire house, but to me, it is the most expansive and precious place on Earth.

Yet just a year ago, in the spring of 2019, it was a different scene and story altogether. The balcony was more of a dump yard with a few sickly plants sticking out of ill-maintained pots. None of us had time to care for them as we were engaged with other important things of life. I was also too busy with school, friends, and play.

The turning point happened during the Covid-19 lockdown. It changed the trajectory of my life.

One day into the lockdown, I wanted to have tomato sandwiches, but vegetables were in short supply, with only potatoes and onions available in the market. There was only a dried tomato at home. I was upset and irritated as till then, I had taken the availability of food for granted. I harboured the notion that vegetables could be purchased anytime from the supermarket.

Hearing my complaints, my mother sarcastically commented that if I was so fond of tomatoes, I should try growing them in our balcony as now I had lots of free time.

The idea appealed to me, and I decided to give it a try. I watched a few YouTube videos as to how to get started. I picked up the lone tomato, cut it, scooped out the seeds, spread them on one of the pots and covered them with a thin layer of soil.
Then my wait began. A few days later, when three tiny saplings appeared, my joy knew no bounds. The sacred brown bull hidden in the depths of the earth had created magic and come to my aid.

Encouraged by the results, I soon began to grow a few of my other favorite vegetables - chilies, brinjals, and capsicum. The lockdown was put to good use and the sight of tiny plants continuously inching up kept me positive and productive. Everyday there was something new to look forward to.

Hearing and seeing my success story through pictures and videos, my friends too got motivated to cultivate their patch of green.

Today, my balcony is a transformed space. It has changed me too - I have grown more responsible, mature and conscious about our connection with nature and the need for nurturing it for our good. A simple truth, which I had not known all these 15 years, just after fifteen days of lockdown, got it into me.

Our primitive ancestors were primarily growers and gatherers. They had access to none of the sophisticated technologies that we have today and yet, they were self-sufficient in matters of food.

And we, the urban folks?

We have gone to Mars and are adept in Artificial Intelligence, but when it comes to growing our greens, we score a big Zero. We are so dependent on external sources that being unable to access the market for a day makes us feel helpless and out of place.

That is why I feel a part of future science and research should be directed towards making people, particularly the urban people, and more self-sufficient in terms of our basic needs. With the help of innovative, cost-effective, environment-friendly technologies like solar energy and hydroponics, people can be conditioned to contribute towards their daily dietary consumption instead of just purchasing it from the market. With awareness about nature’s generous bounty followed by active involvement, respect and restraint (so that there is minimal misuse and abuse for nature’s resources) will automatically follow.

Achieving a sustainable balance is the key to ensuring the sustainability of life on this planet. While we reach out for the sky and aim at touching new highs, it is incredibly crucial to strengthen the Earth beneath our feet.
Year 1 AC (After Coronavirus)
Pan India Online Essay Contest 2020

Essay Topic: What will be the role of young people in addressing the crisis caused by the pandemic and related issues, such as new balances in power, raising inequalities and reduced employment opportunities?

Today, we all are living in quarantine to stay safe and keeping others safe. It seems like the mighty has pushed the pause button for all of us to make us rethink the life we are living, the way we are proceeding and the future we are building.

We young people have a sense of urgency for everything that makes us hustle to achieve everything promptly. The word “patience” barely exists in the dictionary for most of us, and is wiping out in the left ones due to the competitive world we are living in today.

We have loads of trouble that we can point out in this time, but in the mob of hundreds of mindsets, I have erected my foundation stone on the point that Sir Isaac Newton discovered gravity during ‘plague epidemic’ quarantine, which indicates that isolation is good for creative ideas if we use our time wisely.

Due to this pandemic, every country is facing severe economic damage, and so do their citizens. In this tough time, I feel that youth needs to hold the torch of responsibilities and should lead everyone towards a better world. In this digital era, we are in need to learn the profitable use of technology, which will help us to solve the challenges of life.

As a young person myself, I am quite familiar with how most of us are working very hard to achieve meritorious marks in exams, get the dream job, earn lots of money, travel the world and have name and fame in society. However, the reverse is the present condition offer us a bonus time to be with ourselves more and hone our skills, which we neglected due to other important activities.

The first in this list could be a ‘new skill’. There are various internet platforms where you can learn anything you want like YouTube, Udemy and SkillShare, which provides a variety of
dedicated courses to learn any skill from beginner to expert level at no cost. Nevertheless, due to this pandemic, various prestigious universities like Harvard, Stanford, and Copenhagen have made their expensive learning courses free for all, which is just like icing on the cake for dedicated learners.

Now, if you ask for the implementation part, I have another gift in the pocket!

Nowadays, due to heavy workload and lack of skill, big companies, and even individuals post proposals for getting their work done for which they are ready to pay. There are various online legal websites like Fiverr and freelancer where you can get direct employment on a work hour basis as per your comfort and the work that you are ready to provide to the work seeker.

By investing a small amount of time daily, everyone can earn sufficient money to fulfil their basic needs. In this way, if every curious, passionate, and dedicated citizen, especially youth, dedicate this precious time to developing and mastering a financial skill, then the economy of India, as well as other countries, can be brought in a stable condition in and after the pandemic.

As far as equality and power are concerned, I believe that if a small virus can affect both rich and poor, males and females, superior and inferior equally, then, why cannot we equalize the expression of love, care, kindness, and service for all?

In my opinion, these are the “foundation stones” of developing equality and balance in power.

“Every charitable act is a stepping stone towards heaven.”
- Henry Ward Beecher

Keeping these words in mind, we should perform good deeds and ask everyone for the same.
Because,

“If many little people in many little places do many little things
Then we can surely create a better world.”