

Argumentative Essay Practice 7

Question: Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly. Do you agree?

Step 1: Defining key terms

1. 'Celebrities' – people who have **strong influence over large groups of followers/individuals who have strong presence in the media industries**

⇒ Typical understanding of celebrities are movie stars, or highly-successful singers, etc.

(Could give some examples of famous celebrities – Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley and more popular ones are Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, etc)

⇒ Might also have to take into consideration the new definitions of 'celebrities' we have in mind today: given the rise of social media platforms, those who have huge followings on these sites are also considered 'celebrities' in their own rights

⇒ The definition of celebrities therefore will evolve and change based on the current socio-cultural trends that characterise each era

2. 'role models' – are the people who **set a certain standard of social behaviour or moral conduct for the rest to follow**, often looked up to by the people who respect them greatly

⇒ Often, role models exhibit (or at least, are expected to showcase) **exemplary behaviours** because they are a strong source of influence for others

⇒ Also need to note that **'role models' are subjective** – in other words, individuals have a right to choose who they want to look up to, even if the actions of these individuals are not desirable/socially acceptable

⇒ The standards of what a 'role model' means to everyone is different

3. **'act accordingly'** – to what is expected of a role model! Even though, as mentioned, the idea of a role model can be subjectively defined, how they should act is often understood to be in a way that is: **socially responsible, appropriate, sensitive to others', not offensive/vulgar, etc.**

Step 2: Considering some further questions...

- For this question, no conditions are needed to be stated, given that it is not an absolute question. We then consider a few questions to help facilitate our brainstorming process.

Q1) Why do you think celebrities are considered role models in the first place?

- Given that celebrities often have an immense amount of fans, their scope of influence on the groups of individuals who worship and admire them is significant
- Many times, these celebrities are being **idolized intensely by their loyal fans** – not only do they swoon over their good looks, many see them as symbols of empowerment and inspiration
- It is common for fans to want to emulate the behavioural standards of their idols, seeing them as a **standard to strive towards** to, not just in superficial terms, but they also **internalize these celebrities' values and ideals**. Of course, it is arguable whether or not these fans are merely attending to an idealised vision of their idols
- The **desire to emulate** their role models is obvious from the number of social trends – from fashion to slogans – that were influenced by celebrities. 'Swag' came from Justin Bieber, and how Marilyn Monroe became a fashion icon even till today
- Therefore, given the **immense amount of influence** that these celebrities yield, it is expected that they take on the status of being a role model to their fans – and to set an appropriate conduct for them to follow after

Q2) Do you think celebrities today have a stronger influence over their following today than in the past?

- Arguably yes- which is also what makes this issue of considerable significance and importance
- The digital advancements that has unlocked many multiple convenient ways to follow celebrities' every moment is made possible with the social media platforms – Twitter, Instagram, Youtube.
- These are sites that celebrities themselves use very actively, which in turns help increase their connectivity with and influence over their fans. Fans get **sneak peeks into the lives of these celebrities** via their regular tweets or Instagram posts – something that is rarely done in the past, when celebrities' **private lives are shrouded in secrecy and up for public speculation**

- The **increase in intimacy** between the celebrity and fans strengthens the bonds between them, and also makes it more possible for them to emulate their idols when they are able to observe more closely how they live
- Not to mention, these social media platforms themselves have **led to the rise of new celebrities – albeit unconventional ones**, who have found fame and success from successfully garnering a huge following on these sites
- Therefore, with the new forms of digital connection and cultural milieu that characterises our contemporary times, **the relationship between celebrities and their fan base** have been likewise transformed

Step 3: Brainstorming for arguments...

Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly (i.e. you <i>agree</i>)	Celebrities might have a strong influence but does not necessarily need to live up to expectations (i.e. you <i>disagree</i>)
<p>Celebrities are role models and should act according <u>because they are inevitably in the limelight most of the time.</u></p> <p>⇒ Paparazzi are quick to snap pictures of celebrities in public, and detailing their behaviours in tabloid magazines to gain viewership</p> <p>⇒ The celebrity culture today has intensified, and fans are jumping on every opportunity they have to grab a new piece of juicy information on their idols</p> <p>⇒ Constantly being showered with attention from the public <u>translates to an added responsibility to behave appropriately</u>, given the intense amount of scrutiny they would receive from the media</p> <p>⇒ Their loyal supporters <u>will also be expectant of them to behave desirably in real life</u> and would be disappointed to see their idols acting in insensitive or offensive manner</p>	<p>Celebrities are not obliged to take on the identity of being role models <u>because as individuals, they deserve the right to the freedom of choice.</u></p> <p>⇒ In actual fact, it isn't part of a celebrity's job scope to make sure they are suitable role models for people to look up to</p> <p>⇒ Celebrities themselves <u>have never explicitly agreed to become role models for their loyal fan base</u>, or for the public</p> <p>⇒ Whether or not they are aware of their influence, and whether or not they see it as an individual responsibility to use it constructively and positively is ultimately still their choice</p> <p>⇒ It <u>stems from our personal expectations we exert upon them to act in an exemplary manner</u></p> <p>⇒ Celebrities are famous for their personalities, their creations, their talents and abilities but very little for their moral conducts/upright behaviours</p> <p>⇒ The pressure to become a role model is <u>only tied to the fact that they receive very high media coverage</u>, and are often placed under the harsh, scrutiny of the public eye</p>

- ⇒ Being placed in the limelight means that every minute detail of one's behaviour will be amplified significantly
- ⇒ While it may be unfair for celebrities to have to put through such demanding standards,
- ⇒ This is often a price they have to pay for their fame and success

Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly because these high-profile individuals **often term themselves as 'influencers'.**

- ⇒ This self-applied label is an explicit acknowledgement of their own capacities to influence others
- ⇒ This means they should take up the **responsibility of using their influence over their followers in an appropriate manner.**
- ⇒ Having such an immense scope of influence over large groups of people demands for an equally intense responsibility and ownership over such ability to use one's power constructively
- ⇒ Many people expect 'influencers' to be responsible with their actions as well, precisely because of **how they choose to label themselves**
- ⇒ This is why many people often express disappointment in celebrities who do not manage to live up to their personal expectations despite being so eager to label themselves as 'influencers'
- ⇒ The term 'influencers' is loaded with meaning – especially entailing that of responsibility **to be a positive source of influence on others**

- ⇒ Just because they are inevitably placed in the limelight does not mean that they should be deprived of the freedom to make decisions on their own
- ⇒ Celebrities should **remain as people who are celebrated for their achievements and creations,** instead of being forced to become an ideal for people to model after
- ⇒ There are many celebrities who are often berated for their destructive or inappropriate behaviours but still **continue to garner the support** of millions worldwide for their **creative endeavours**

Celebrities should not be pressured to constantly behave like role models **because like everyone else, they are human beings prone to mistakes imperfection.**

- ⇒ Sometimes fans and the public get too caught up in the **idealisation** of these mega stars and **envisioning them as saints and perfect beings** that we forget these people are fallible humans

Fallible: Capable of making mistakes and being in the wrong

- ⇒ Everyone has a negative side to them that they are unwilling to reveal and celebrities are not an exception
- ⇒ It is easy to forget how similar celebrities are compared to many of us, because in numerous ways, they live vastly different lifestyles than the average person
- ⇒ Because we are so used to **placing them on a pedestal to worship,** it becomes a bitter pill to swallow when the perfect vision of our idols are shattered by a **shocking revelation of their dirty secrets in public**
- ⇒ It is hard for most of us to accept that someone we admire through huge cinema screens could be in the wrong

- ⇒ Often, celebrities do have young and impressionable supporters constituting a significant part of their fan base
- ⇒ If they begin to pick up socially undesirable and negative habits from their celebrities (such as the use of vulgar language unnecessary, stealing, being insensitive to others in public, etc.)
- ⇒ It would be **harmful to the larger community** as the celebrities would have shaped and set off a trend that is potentially disruptive to social stability and the cultural fabric
- ⇒ Some younger fans may be less able to judge on their own, what are beneficial habits to emulate, and what are harmful ones they should follow through
- ⇒ Therefore, there is a need for these celebrities to 'act accordingly' in a way that contributes to a **positive and constructive use of their influence** to yield positive/desirable outcomes.

Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly because of **their prominent presence in the media and overall society.**

- ⇒ The celebrity culture **constitutes a huge part of our daily entertainment,** as well as our socio-cultural trends
- ⇒ These celebrities are often key figures in promoting particular behavioural trends or social conduct that we emulate and follow after
- ⇒ These trends extend **beyond fashion-related ones,** and could also involve meaningful **socio-political movements or advocacies**
- ⇒ Their presence in society is **being amplified** especially with the use of social media and related technologies –

- ⇒ It should come as **natural that there will be occasions when they flounder and slip,** and commit an act that is transgressive and morally incorrect
- ⇒ It is therefore **unfair to merit them with an disproportionate amount of blame when they commit a mistake** that the average human is likely to make as well
- ⇒ Instead, **people need to understand that celebrities can be in the wrong too,** and that being a good role model *all* the time is close to impossible
- ⇒ Everyone has a negative side to them that they are unwilling to reveal and celebrities are not an exception
- ⇒ Once we are able to understand this truth, it will become much easier for us to accept the celebrities for who they are

Celebrities do not have to act accordingly as role models because **the definition of what a role model mean is subjective**

- ⇒ Often, these celebrities are admired and heralded by their fans as **symbols of inspiration and empowerment** not because of their upright character of perfect moral conduct
- ⇒ Many of these fans find celebrities relatable precisely because these mega stars **show their vulnerable and human side by being open with their failures and mistakes**
- ⇒ To see a celebrity also capable of being at fault is what humanises and personalises them to their fans
- ⇒ As a result, they become even more **connected to and idolized by their admiring supporters**

<p>with their regular updates <u>making them almost omnipresent</u> in the lives of their fans through virtual platforms</p> <p>⇒ With such a strong presence comes naturally with the idea of power and influence</p> <p>⇒ We should not underestimate the <u>power of media in shaping cultural values and social thought</u>, and celebrities are key figures in the process of moulding the overall societal trends due to their massive influence</p> <p>⇒ This therefore adds on to the responsibility for them to act as role models</p>	<p>⇒ Being a role model is <u>less about not making mistakes, but more of being able to own up to one's flaws</u> and showing consistent and significant efforts to overcome these individual imperfections</p> <p>⇒ What we should then emphasize on is that celebrities become role models by being <u>courageous in owning up</u>, rather than actively covering up their mistakes <u>to retain and preserve their reputation</u></p>
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Step 4: Notes on conclusion?

- Remember, a solid conclusion provides interesting insights into the topic
- It could be a new perspective that you've not managed to include in your arguments above
- But never, EVER bring in a significant point that sounds like an argument!
- Your conclusion is the END of an essay, do not bring in any additional points to make it confusing for your reader

⇒ **In this case, some insights into the conclusion here can include:**

1. Noting once again, the significance of celebrity culture and media content in shaping social trends, cultural values and behaviour
2. That the emphasis on celebrities to be role models seems to be viewed as an exchange for the fame and wealth that they have received
3. Overall, despite their protests and disagreements, there is **a kind of inevitability** when it comes to being *viewed* as a role model by others
4. While celebrities need not strive to preserve a perfect reputation, they should at least put in **effort in owning up when necessary**
5. To **yield their influence in a constructive and positive manner** is a desirable thing

Argumentative Practice 7: Essay Review

Question: Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly. Do you agree?

Segment	Elaboration
Introduction	
Lead in (Significance of topic, setting context, giving background details)	<p>Celebrities have often been placed on a pedestal for admiration and idolatry by their loyal fans. Celebrity culture has existed long before the current century, though it may have become more prominent today. The rise of digital technologies like the Internet and the proliferation of social media sites have made it much easier to connect with our pop idols from their tweets and Instagram pictures.</p> <p>Stemming from our deep admiration for these people that we look up to, it is common for us to want to shape our thoughts and align our behaviours to these celebrities. Apparently, modelling our behaviour after these huge pop stars becomes easily facilitated the generous sneak peeks of their lives that they feed to us on their social media accounts.</p>
Listing down argument points	<p>Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly even if they disagree with this status. The newer generation of celebrities today call themselves 'influencers' and this self-applied term translates to recognizing one's ability to influence their fans' behaviours.</p> <p>Secondly, these high-profile celebrities who are constantly in the limelight inevitably have to police their behaviours more closely, which will likely to be published on tabloid magazines.</p>
Balance Point	<p>However, it could be too harsh for us to exercise such demanding expectations on their conduct. Celebrities are after all, human beings who are prone to failures and mistakes that we all make as well.</p>
Stand	I agree that celebrities are role models and that they should act accordingly.
Argument	
TS Make sure it <u>directly answers</u> the question	<p>Celebrities are role models and should act accordingly because they personally acknowledge their ability to influence the actions and thoughts of their fans.</p>
Explanation Check for logical gaps	<p>Especially for the younger generations of celebrities that have spawned on social media platforms like Instagram and Youtube, they label themselves as 'influencers' – a distinctly 21st century term that has popularised in its usage amongst the youths.</p>

<p>Expressions to be clear and direct</p> <p>Grammar errors</p>	<p>The term itself carries the word ‘influence’ – and given that so many of these younger celebrities today are explicitly attaching and accepting this term as part of defining their character, they cannot deny the responsibilities that such an influence entails.</p> <p><i>Note: For the next section, see how I qualified that their fan base could likely be made up of young and impressionable teenagers.</i></p> <p>As they bask in the attention showered on them by their fans, it is also important for them to recognize that they have an obligation to their large fan base to be socially responsible with their actions. This is especially important if the fan base comprise mainly of impressionable teenagers, who can be easily influenced. <u>Having power to influence a group of people demands that the person exerts it constructively, so that it yields positive results for the larger community and society.</u></p> <p>While it can be noted that not all celebrities have agreed to accept these labels, a considerable number of them do. Even if celebrities have not explicitly conferred this title on themselves, they should also be astute enough to understand their scope of influence on their loyal fans.</p>
<p>Example</p> <p>Relevance</p> <p>Representativeness</p> <p>Accuracy</p>	<p>Individuals who have successfully created a huge following on Youtube have gained a somewhat celebrity-like status, without being starred as the lead for any box-office mega-movie films. However, some of these ‘Youtubers’ have been flamed for being insensitive and crude in their behaviour, especially in the videos that they upload online.</p> <p>For instance, one of the biggest Youtube star Logan Paul was caught in a flurry of angry lash-back against one of his daily ‘vlogs’ (video blog), whereby he entered the Suicide Forest in Japan, and inappropriately made light of a solemn situation by poking fun at a dead body hanging from a tree. Although severe disrespect he portrayed has garnered furious comments, this fan base however, did not seem to find it problematic. Before it was taken down, the video received millions of views and hundreds and thousands of likes.</p> <p>Such behaviour on his part can mislead his young fan base on the gravity of the topic at hand – suicide and death. His irresponsible actions would have conveyed very inappropriate messages to his audience, who might exhibit the same insensitivity towards the same serious issues.</p>
<p>Final Link</p> <p>Succinct and clear</p>	<p>Therefore, given that influencers themselves are <i>aware</i> of their power to influence means that they cannot shirk the responsibility of acting accordingly as role models.</p>