

Candidate 6 evidence

Can I be Bothered?

Can I be bothered? This is a question that has a habit of floating hazily through my mind. So far, my laziness has not had a major impact, but I fear the day of reckoning is looming.

In my latest report, my Maths teacher seems to be hinting politely at me picking up the pace a little: 'laidback approach to his studies provides an element of tranquility in the class'. Thanks. I like to think I am preserving some calm, like the 'boy ... on the burning deck', when all around me are teetering on the brink of hysteria, ready to plummet into the darkest depths at the first setback. Admittedly the aforementioned 'boy' stayed at his post not through laziness, but through a strong sense of duty, and paid with his life. That might be taking it a little too far. However, there are so many angst-ridden teenagers suffering from pre-exam stress, it helps to redress the balance to have someone languorously loafing, exuding an air of serenity. How does she know that underneath the calm exterior I am not a bag of nerves? Okay, perhaps I'm not, but I do know that I need to follow her advice and that my procrastination must end soon if I am 'to realise my full potential'. Unfortunately, these sentiments are being echoed by my chemistry teacher who is advising that I am 'capable of more and must start by being more organised.' The sad fact is that she's right.

This advice is also being bandied around at home. Commonly aired phrases are, 'You've got the ability but you need to develop more staying power'. On the other hand, I am frequently heard to say, 'Can I have a break now?' Unlike the stalwart boy in the poem, I'm all too ready to abandon my post. My mum has learned to keep a whip at hand, especially as I recently burned the midnight oil (and beyond) completing a history essay. Fair credit to me, I do get things handed in on time. Perhaps my chemistry teacher's right, and I do have timing issues. Perhaps I could cash in on this and get extra time in my exams...

Recently I have gone down the route of advising my mum that I have which is what is preventing me from applying myself. She's having none of it. Instead she is pointing a stern finger at the Nutella jar, the Coco Pops box and the crisps stash. She seems to think that the much-maligned E-numbers might be playing a part in my hyperactivity. Confession time. I do consume vast numbers of 'Hoobalicious' treats (more about 'The Hoobs' to follow shortly). In fact, now I think about it, my increased snack intake may well be one of my many work avoidance tactics.

Undeniably there has been a sea change. As a small boy, I rose before the rest of the household, helped myself to some cereal and popped on 'The Hoobs'. Believe me, you have to be an early bird to beat my dad who is up insanely early. By the way, if my cultural allusion to 'The Hoobs' has got you wondering, they are luridly coloured puppets with crazy hair who used to feature on Channel 4's popular 06:00-07:00 slot. In fact, I have just been vindicated (yes, I've just taken

a few minutes out to revisit my old friends) having discovered that they are BAFTA award winning Hoobs! I was discerning even then. I am also astonished to discover they have been axed! On further reflection, it has occurred to me that in spite of rising with the lark, I was not exactly throwing myself into an energetic pursuit, settling myself on the sofa with some Shreddies.

It has also occurred to me that my reputation for being ever so slightly chilled set in quite early: on sleepovers I was the first to succumb to sleep. The word 'sleepover' is surely an oxymoron if ever there was one. For most children it meant a crazed night of too many E-numbers, but in my case, I did what it says on the tin and slept over...

Back to the sofa. The spot from which I once watched the Hoobs has now become my football management position. Why stand on a cold touchline when you can sink into the warm embrace of a sofa? Sadly, my waistline is increasing in keeping with my managerial reputation (or is that just the snack habit?). 'FIFA' is now taking up an inordinate amount of my time, with virtual football substituting for the beautiful game.

I loved football. I even enjoyed playing in driving wind and rain; it's just as well, living in a wet and windy region of Scotland. However, you've guessed it: having worked my way through a range of clubs that folded, or failed; having made the big time by finally being offered a place in a decent team, I took the easy option. The decent team had high expectations of its players: two training sessions a week, three private jogs and summer fitness camps to boot! These grueling conditions weren't for me. I quit. Okay, I wasn't going to be the next Pelé and I wasn't even going to be signed for _____ but I might have enjoyed playing for a good team. Sadly, the latest development in my football career is that my mum has shown me the red card as far as FIFA is concerned. In all fairness I was issued with more than one yellow card, and ignored all of the warnings. It looks like my managerial career is on hold for the time being.

Don't get me wrong. In spite of my well-honed ability to conserve energy, I do have ambition. It's just that I am directing my efforts and using my time efficiently. This is a good business model. I appreciate I may have created a bad impression of myself, but that isn't the whole story. I hold my hands up to being a trifle lazy, but perhaps I'm just not getting enough sleep: everyone knows that teenagers need a huge amount of sleep. A little more research has just revealed that to function at optimum levels, teens need over nine hours of sleep a night. Maybe this is my problem?

This leads neatly into getting up in the morning. Being ready on time is not a skill I have mastered yet. You might be surprised to hear that I have a morning paper round, but you won't be surprised to hear that I sleep through my alarm, through my dad's increasingly aggressive wake up calls and through my own tiny internal voice of conscience. However, I am dependable and never let my boss down. Clearly a good work ethic does exist and this might just see me through my exams (and hopefully my folio too!). A recent visit from my big sister, who is a model student at university, has further focused my efforts.

My sister, often inadvertently referred to as 'mum' because of her bossy nature, has set the bar high. I have to confess to being a tiny bit competitive and perhaps this will be my saving grace. I'm done with hearing about her 'A' grades and her stoical approach to her studying. She's thrown down the gauntlet and it's time to take up the mantle. It's time to act. My lazy days are over...

Anyway, the Nutella is calling and FIFA awaits. I'd like to conclude my essay with one final reference to my old friends, the Hoobs, and celebrate with their congratulatory chant: "Hoobledoop-Hoobledoop-Whoop-Whoop-Whoop!"