

Discussion/Written Response Topic:

Our society is increasingly disillusioned with the public school system. Upset with the public school curriculum, but unable to afford private schools, more and more parents are creating “home schools” for their children. According to the US Department of Education, at least 250,000 kids are home-schooled – an increase from roughly 10,000 since the early 1970s.

While the teaching of knowledge and skills is the principle (manifest) function of the public educational system, schools also teach values through classroom experiences (usually manifest functions) and peer socialization (latent functions). What are the different principal values that are communicated through public school? How do these differ from the ones that would likely be taught by home schooling? What might the “hidden curriculum” for home schooling be (latent functions)?