Illegal immigration into the United States is massive in scale. According to the Department of Homeland Security, more than 11 million undocumented aliens currently reside in the US, and that population is growing by 700,000 per year. There are many reasons why immigrants choose to enter the US, and there are varied opinions about whether immigrants are an asset or a liability to our country.

Write an article for your local newspaper describing some of the causes of immigration and its effects. You may use the following information, your own experiences, observations, and/or readings.

“America was indebted to immigration for her settlement and prosperity. That part of America which had encouraged them most had advanced most rapidly in population, agriculture and the arts.”

-Source: James Madison

“Some people argue current levels of immigration are literally destroying communities because undocumented workers are driving blue-collar wages so low a middle class standard of living is becoming unattainable for many working Americans. Such arguments often claim foreign workers are particularly detrimental to the job prospects of young African-American men lacking high school diplomas. Yet, according to polls, at least until very recently, possibly a majority of American citizens believe otherwise. Many Americans are more likely to believe immigrants fill jobs that without them would remain vacant and that their labor is actually accelerating economic growth and expanding overall employment.”

-Source: Jaynes, Gerald D. “Economic Effects of Contemporary Immigration.”

“We must never forget that many immigrants come to this country in desperate circumstances. Some have fled political persecution, war, and economic devastation . . . Others have wagered on finding a better life in this country in the face of economic desperation at home. As Pope John Paul II has noted, ‘In many regions of the world today people live in tragic situations of instability and uncertainty. It does not come as a surprise that in such contexts the poor and the destitute make plans to escape, to seek a new land that can offer them bread, dignity and peace. This is the migration of the desperate . . .’”


“Any sizable increase in the number of immigrants will inevitably lower wages for some American workers. Conversely, reducing the supply of labor by strict immigration enforcement and reduced legal immigration would increase the earnings of native workers.”


As you write a letter about immigration, remember to:

- Focus on the meaning of immigration.
- Consider the purpose, audience, and context of your article.
- Organize your letter so that your ideas progress logically.
- Include relevant details that clearly develop your letter.
- Edit your article for standard grammar and language usage.