

WRITE TO EDUCATE

Scholarship Contest Winner

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Essay Topic: Describe a problem facing your community and explain how you would help address or solve it. Discuss the impact your solution could have on others.

In today's health-conscious world, many people in my community believe they are making better choices by purchasing "natural" beverages, "clean" snacks and other products labeled as "healthy". However, a closer look reveals a troubling issue: greenwashing. Companies market products as healthy even though they still contain artificial sweeteners, hidden additives, and preservatives. As a result, people trying to improve their health are often unknowingly consuming ingredients that can work against their goals.

This issue is particularly noticeable in the hydration and sports drink market. If you walk into any gym or grocery store, you'll find brightly colored drinks or electrolyte powders claiming to boost performance and recovery. However a good number of these products contain artificial dyes, preservatives, and sweeteners, which may lead to discomfort or even chronic illnesses. Still, even so-called clean products usually hide bad ingredients behind misleading marketing. To athletes and active people, who are deeply concerned with what they feed their bodies, it raises confusion and mistrust.

This problem was revealed to me as a result of my personal health experience. After I struggled with fatigue, gut problems and asthma, I began paying closer attention to the ingredients in the products I used daily. When I switched to simpler, more natural options, I noticed improvements in my energy and how I felt. That experience was an eye-opener to how powerful clean, natural ingredients can be, and how deceptive the existing market is.

To address this problem, I founded Cleonse Hydration, a clean electrolyte drink startup built on transparency and trust. Rather than relying on long lists of ingredients or artificial additives, Cleonse is crafted with just three ingredients: organic lemon, organic cane sugar, and sea salt. Every ingredient serves a purpose: the sea salt replenishes sodium lost through sweat, the cane sugar helps the body absorb water more efficiently, and the lemon provides a refreshing flavor along with natural vitamin C. It contains no dyes, no artificial sweeteners and no hidden ingredients.

Beyond the product itself, my goal with Cleonse is to shift how people think about health products. Instead of relying on marketing claims, I would like the consumers to have the confidence of knowing what exactly they are introducing in their bodies. Through the simplicity of the formula and the clear explanation of each ingredient's purpose, I hope to rebuild trust that has been lost due to greenwashing.

The impact of this approach can extend beyond just one product. For individuals, having access to a truly clean hydration option can improve energy levels, support recovery, and reduce exposure to unnecessary additives. To the athletes, it is a way of fueling performance without compromising their health. At a bigger level, it can make other brands strive towards increased transparency and simplicity, elevating the industry standard.

Additionally, Cleonse is designed to be accessible. By offering samples in local gyms and engaging directly with customers, I can educate people in my community about hydration, ingredients, and how to make informed choices. These conversations are just as important as the product itself, because they empower individuals to take control of their health.

Greenwashing thrives in situations when the consumers are intimidated or deceived. I am striving to use a product that is simple and honest. Cleonse Hydration is not merely about clean ingredients; it is about building trust, transparency, and helping people in my community to make decisions that truly support their well-being.

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