

## SAT Practice Essay #7 Example

In "The North West London Blues," Zadie Smith highlights the value of public libraries and that they should remain open. Smith details that, in spite of opponents' claims, libraries are still as popular as ever and offer a unique public benefit. By employing sound reasoning, literary devices, and emotional appeal, Smith effectively conveys her argument.

Smith begins her essay by stating the viewpoint of technocrats, who think that libraries serve no function in today's Internet world; and the council members, who claim that libraries are unpopular. The author immediately challenges both theories by providing an anecdote of her daily difficulties at Kendal Rise, "Each morning, I struggle to find a seat in the packed university library, despite the fact that every single student could be at home in front of their macbook." Smith also cites that British libraries received over 300 million visits last year, although no source is provided. By employing a vivid personal example, and then validating her experience with a believable macro-statistic, Smith is able to skillfully undermine both anti-library positions.

The author then asserts the real reason that Kendal Rise is being closed "not because it is unpopular, but because it is unprofitable." Smith reasons that another library, Willesden Green, is being "mutilated" because the members of the council "see the opportunity for a sweet real estate deal." The author does acknowledge that "money is tight" for library funding, and even proposes a solution that friends of Kendall Rise are willing to run the libraries themselves. By exposing the library opponents as greedy opportunists who are destroying these institutions, Smith is gaining the sympathy of reader. And by offering a solution, she seems reasonable and credible.

Finally, the author makes an emotional plea for the true worth of public libraries. That people are humans, not robots, and they love libraries like Kendall Rise. She continues, that libraries are one of the few social goods that matter to all types of people, and offer an indoor space in which "you do not have to buy anything to stay," and "the only thing left that doesn't want either your soul or your wallet." Smith states that patrons of the libraries are so passionate, they are willing to form human chains in front of them. Smith closes her essay with a heartfelt plea, "can we please keep our libraries." By using emotional methods, the author soundly argues that this is not simply a matter of economics, but a deeply personal issue for all citizens.

By the conclusion of the essay, the readers might well be prompted to recall their own library and realize that it is truly a unique public venue. Zadie Smith has deftly made her case that, in today's changing world, public libraries are more important than ever and they must be kept open.