

Section 1:

#1 "Fairness is something we all expect but don't always receive. In a perfect world, everyone would pull their weight, share responsibilities, and respect each other's time. But reality isn't always so simple. Sometimes, we find ourselves carrying burdens meant to be shared, faced with a difficult choice: do we speak up for ourselves or stay silent to keep the peace? I learned this lesson hard in a group project where my friends left me to do all the work."

Strengths: You effectively establish the theme of fairness with a thoughtful opening that moves from general to specific. Your metaphor of "carrying burdens" creates a vivid image.

Weakness: Abrupt transition to personal experience. → Your final sentence jumps too quickly into your specific experience without proper build-up. This creates a jarring shift for readers rather than a smooth progression into your story. The phrase "I learned this lesson hard" tells rather than shows your experience.

Perhaps I could relate this universal experience of fairness to my personal situation more gradually: "This tension between speaking up and keeping the peace became all too real for me during a recent group project with my friends."

#2 "The conflict within me grew. I knew I couldn't keep doing everything alone, but I didn't want to upset my friends. Speaking up felt risky—what if they got defensive? What if they thought I was bossy or overly serious? The thought of being seen as "the difficult one" gnawed at me. But so did the unfairness of the situation. Why should I suffer while they enjoyed themselves? The longer I stayed silent, the heavier the resentment became, like a backpack filled with stones."

Strengths: You effectively capture internal conflict through questions that show your thought process. The backpack metaphor powerfully illustrates how resentment weighs you down.

Weakness: Repetitive sentence structure. → Many of your sentences follow the same pattern, which creates a monotonous rhythm. For example, "Speaking up felt risky" and "The thought of being seen as 'the difficult one' gnawed at me" both begin with similar constructions. This repetition makes your writing less engaging.

I felt torn between two impossible choices. On one hand, confronting my friends risked our relationship. On the other hand, my growing resentment—heavy as a backpack filled with stones—threatened to crush me with each passing day.

#3 "Eventually, I reached my breaking point. With trembling hands, I typed a message in our group chat, carefully choosing my words to avoid sounding too harsh. I told them I was overwhelmed and that if they didn't contribute, I would have no choice but to involve the teacher. My heart pounded as I hit send. The moment of truth had arrived."

Strengths: You use physical details like "trembling hands" and "heart pounded" to effectively show your nervousness. These concrete details make your emotions real for readers.

Weakness: Lack of specific dialogue. → You mention typing a message but don't share your exact words. Including some specific phrases from your message would make this confrontation more authentic and impactful. The phrase "I told them I was overwhelmed" summarises rather than shows your communication.

Eventually, I reached my breaking point. With trembling hands, I typed: "I've been working on this project every night while you all haven't contributed anything. Either we divide the work equally today, or I'll need to speak with Mrs. Johnson tomorrow." My heart pounded as I hit send.

■ Your piece effectively explores the theme of fairness through a personal experience that many readers can relate to. The emotional journey from conflict to resolution is clear, but could be strengthened with more sensory details. For instance, how did the classroom look and sound during your presentation? How did your friends' faces change when you confronted them? Adding these specific details would make your experience more vivid for readers. Also, your conclusion feels rushed and could explore the lesson learned more deeply. What specific boundaries will you set in future group work? How has this changed your approach to friendship? These reflections would add depth to your piece. Additionally, consider developing the characters of your friends more fully so readers understand why their behaviour hurt you so much. Were these long-time friends? Had they been reliable before?

Score: 41/50

Section 2:

["Fairness is not an attitude. It's a skill that must be developed and exercised." – Brit Hume.

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At first, I was excited about working with my friends. It seemed like the perfect opportunity to blend school and fun. But as the project deadline crept closer, I ~~realized~~ [realised] I was the only one taking it seriously. While I spent hours researching, ~~organizing~~ [organising], and perfecting our presentation, my friends treated the whole thing like a joke. They scrolled on their phones, laughed at inside jokes, and assured me they would "help later." But later never came.

#2 The conflict within me grew. I knew I couldn't keep doing everything alone, but I didn't want to upset my friends. Speaking up felt risky—what if they got defensive? What if they thought I was bossy or overly serious? The thought of being seen as "the difficult one" gnawed at me. But so did the unfairness of the situation. Why should I suffer while they enjoyed themselves? The longer I stayed silent, the heavier the resentment became, like a backpack filled with stones.

#3 Eventually, I reached my breaking point. With trembling hands, I typed a message in our group chat, carefully choosing my words to avoid sounding too harsh. I told them I was overwhelmed and that if they didn't contribute, I would have no choice but to involve the teacher. My heart pounded as I hit send. The moment of truth had arrived.

At first, they laughed it off, as they always did. "Relax, it's just a project," one said. But when they saw I wasn't joking, their attitudes shifted. They finally agreed to help—although their effort was minimal at best. They completed the bare minimum, just enough to say they participated, while I continued carrying most of the load.

We received a good grade when we finally presented, but the victory felt hollow. Instead of feeling proud, I felt drained and disillusioned. I had always believed friendships were built on mutual respect, but this experience made me question that belief. If people only valued me when it was convenient, was that friendship? Standing up for myself was necessary, even if it was uncomfortable. Some lessons come the hard way, but they stay with you, shaping how you see the world.]