U.S. SUBSIDIES ESSAY
Mr. Lange -- Economics

Directions:

1.) Select one of the following industries that are subsidized by the U.S. government:
   - Corn
   - Sugar
   - Soybeans
   - Oil
   - Tobacco
   - Cotton
   - Financial
   - Utilities
   - Transportation

2.) Conduct research about the subsidy program for your chosen industry, including how much the industry receives each year, the primary companies within the industry that receive the subsidies, the justification or reasons that they receive the subsidies, the social and economic benefits and costs for the subsidies, and any other relevant information.

3.) Using your research on the background and impact of the U.S. government’s subsidy policy toward your industry, you will write an essay that addresses the following statement:

The United States should continue its current subsidy program for your chosen industry. Agree or disagree?

In order to fulfill the assignment, your essay must include the following:

I. Introductory paragraph with a thesis
   a. Begin your essay with a “hook”; an introductory sentence that grabs your reader’s attention.
   b. Continue your introduction by briefly explaining the topic of the essay.
   c. Complete your introduction with your thesis statement.
   d. A thesis is a single sentence within the introduction of your essay that clearly defines your position on the topic.
   e. Your thesis must mention the specific topic (chosen industry), your debatable view (agree or disagree), and the significance of your view to your audience (why people should listen to your opinion).

Sample thesis: The current United States subsidy program for corn production (specific topic) should no longer be continued (debatable view) because it is a poor use of taxpayers’ money and contributes to American obesity rates. (significance of your view).

II. Background/informational paragraph
   a. Your second paragraph will introduce the topic of the current U.S. subsidy program and your chosen industry to your audience.
   b. This should be a broad overview of the topic but still include several relevant or important facts (such as the amount of the yearly subsidy provided to your industry).
   c. Do not begin your argument yet; instead, get your audience acquainted with the topic.

III. Supporting evidence
   a. Your next paragraph(s) will be where you explain your argument.
   b. Your paragraph(s) need to directly address the significance of your view that you proposed in your thesis.
c. For the sample thesis above, the third paragraph might explain why the total amount that U.S. taxpayers pay in corn subsidies has a negative impact on the economy, while the fourth paragraph might explain how the increase in corn syrup in American diets had led to high obesity and increased cases of Type II diabetes.
d. These paragraphs must be well supported with relevant facts/information/data.

IV. Refutation
a. A refutation anticipates and confronts an argument opposite to your position.
b. Ask yourself, “What facts or arguments challenge my opinion?” In other words, think of a possible position that someone might take opposite of yours.
c. Clearly explain this opposition position and address it. Why is your opinion still the correct one? What problems are posed by the opposite position?

V. Conclusion
a. Start your conclusion by summarizing your argument and/or the information you stated in your supporting evidence paragraphs.
b. Your conclusion must reemphasize to the audience the benefits of accepting your argument. Why is your opinion the correct one? Why should people accept your opinion? How would it benefit them and/or society in general?
c. Finish the essay with a strong connection between how your opinion is the correct opinion and how accepting this viewpoint will benefit the reader and the nation.

VI. Bibliography
a. Your essay must include a bibliography of a minimum of four sources (including two not found in the online resources list below) that you used in conducting research for and providing information within your essay.
b. You do not need to do in-text citations.
c. For help on how to format your bibliography, go to: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/08/

Online resources:
✓ http://www.investopedia.com/articles/basics/11/introduction-to-government-subsidies.asp - Overview of the topic of government subsidies (a good place to start!)
✓ http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/subsidy-tracker - National search engine for government subsidies
✓ http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/resources/bibliography#CSW - Bibliography of books and reports related to government subsidies
✓ http://farm.ewg.org/ - Environmental Working Group farm subsidy database
✓ http://priceofoil.org/fossil-fuel-subsidies/ - Fossil fuel subsidy overview
✓ http://www.eia.gov/analysis/requests/subsidy/ - U.S. Energy Information Administration’s report of utilities subsidies

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