

What I require from life by JBS Haldane | Summary

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About Author

“What I require from life” is an essay written by John Burdon Sanderson Haldane. He was a British-Indian Scientist known for his work in the study of physiology, genetics, evolutionary biology, and mathematics. After M.A. graduated in 1914; he enlisted in British Army and served during world war I. After the war, Haldane began his teaching career at the university. In 1940, his essay “what I require from life” was published in the daily worker”. **This essay reflects socialistic convictions demanding democratic activities in workplaces.**

Summary: What I require from life

What I require from life
- By JBS Halsan

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The essay ‘What I require from my life’ explains the needs of human beings which help them to survive easily. In this essay, the writer explains their own

needs by indicating that such needs are essential for all human beings. The author also says that I was born at peaceful age. In my youth, I looked forward to a life of peace. But in 1914, I have been living in a heroic age which brings a great change in my life. He says that he accepts the world as it is. Because he believes that if he imagines the perfect world then we shall do harm to others instead of doing welfare for them.

He prefers to do hard and difficult work to get better fruits (**outcome or reward**) from it. He suggests involving in difficult work because less fruit is obtained from it. Someone said that the fruit of hard work is the sweetest fruit than all others ones.

Here in the essay writer discuss his four basic needs which are also required for all human to live happily.

Those needs are: –

- **Work**

Work is the source of income that helps to fulfill our basic needs. With its help of it, human beings make their survival easy and comfortable. He also said that remuneration must be in accordance with their hard work. In other words, employees should have a decent salary on their job. Besides it, employees also have the freedom to select the area of their work.

- **Good health**

Healthy people can easily work and earn to fulfill their needs. We know, “Health is Wealth”. If people are healthy then they don’t need to spend on the health sector which helps them to live happily by spending that income in other fields. People who are healthy obtain all the things they think. Good health means not only the absence of diseases but it refers to complete physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.

- **Freedom**

Another thing, a writer wants is freedom. The writer says that all citizens have the right to speak and freedom on their job. He mainly focuses on the right to speak. In their past, he wants to speak against falsehood and poisonous aspects but the law disallows him to do it. He says that people must get the right to speak because it helps to know the needs and demands of human beings or the public.

- **Friendship:**

Friendship is also one important need that all people required to live happily. This need helps people to inspire and support each other in different difficult situations. He also says that friendship should be done with an equal standard of people. His friendship must be away or free from the concept of obeying and ordering without any questions.

The writer also says that besides basic needs like food, clothes, and shelter. The above needs are also very important in today's world to live happily. And also he wants an adventurous life, whether there is a risk. According to him, adventure is something much more strong than a thrill. He desires to have his own room with some books, a motor car, a daily bath, a beach, or a river within easy reach. He desires these things however not demands.

The writer says that I am a socialist and I want to see his fellow man and women enjoying the advantages as me. It means that don't become selfish in the present world which helps to establish equality. The writer wants to see the end of class subjection and sex subjection which help to stop discrimination. In simple words, we can say that the writer wants to see the welfare of human beings.

The writer is against capitalism because at the time of depression; the situation of unemployment is created. So, in his opinion, workers/employees have control over the condition of work and the workplace. At last, the author prefers to die happily after seeing capitalism is the overthrow and workers take control of most of Europe. He also wishes for the end of autocratic rule/fascism so the next world war does not begin like First World War. And finally, he wishes to break down peace to all levels of life.

After reading this essay, we came to the conclusion that We should live happily by respecting other rights. We shouldn't be selfish; think for everyone. We must maintain equality to live in a peaceful environment. We must be socialists. People should fulfill all their needs by working hard. Someone said that the fruit of hard work is the sweetest fruit than all others ones. This type of behavior makes us happy after our death too.

What I require from life Exercise:

Reference beyond the text

What do you require from your life to be happy and satisfied?

I require the following things from my life to be happy and satisfied:

- i) Friendship
- ii) Freedom
- iii) Good job
- iv) Good health
- v) Security

What is socialism? How is it different from capitalism?

The system in which the provision of no preference is given to private property or ownership but to social and economical equality is known as socialism. It is different from capitalism because capitalism ignores people's need and disturb equal opportunity but socialisms maintain the equal opportunity to fulfill people's needs.

Why do you think the essayist has taken reference from the ancient philosophers?

I think the essayist has taken reference from the ancient philosopher because he wants to describe the meaning of happiness according to Aristotle and show the meaning of death by comparing it with the death of Socrates.

Discuss the essay in terms of its language, purpose, subject, point of view, and mode of writing.

The essay 'What I require from life' is written by J.B.S. Haldane. This essay is written in simple and lucid language. The writer put his ideas related to socialism. He describes himself as a socialist. As a socialist, his main purpose was to uplift the condition of working-class people. He is against capitalism. His point of view can be observed as a social critic. He writes this essay in descriptive mode but later on, he also explains his political argument to persuade his readers.

Why does the writer demand security?

The writer demands security because the writer enters in heroic age during his youth at the time of the world war. And he wants to save the lives of human beings in such critical conditions so the other ones do not suffer from such a problem as he suffers.

Reference to the text:

“The satisfaction of adventure is something much more solid than a thrill”.

If we should involve in adventurous work due to our desire then we should get satisfaction from it, not fear. So the satisfaction of adventure is something much more solid than a thrill.

“I want the workers to see the fruit of their own work not in profits for others but in their own and their friend’s well-being?”

Here in the essay writer introduce himself as a socialist. He thinks of his friends living happily as him. He suggests to the worker to work hard to get the best fruit of their own work not in profits for others. In other words, it means that workers should work for their profit as well as their friends not for the owner (others). In his opinion, workers/employees have control over the condition of work and the workplace. Workers must get wages in accordance with their capacity.