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Prompt 4: Nature vs. Nurture

Success comes in many forms and can be determined by external factors, regardless of genetics and hard work. This can be implied to both animals and humans. In simple terms, a person's genetics can partially predict their probability of success in life, and this is also true for animals. Although success can be defined differently by various people, what many initially think of when they read the word "success", is wealth and purpose. Throughout my essay, I will be defining "success" as wealth and purpose.

Initiating with human beings, my belief towards their success is indicated by both genetics and hard work. Focusing primarily on genetics, socioeconomic status is an external factor that provides someone with a further advantage in being successful in life. Looking at the economy we currently live in, it has been demonstrated that the rich are getting richer. The reason for this is because of generational wealth, and having the opportunity to access resources where they are being taught financial literacy. Studies have shown that genes and your family's economic status are the biggest predictors of academic success, and academic success opens up challenging job opportunities.

However, I do believe that behind generational wealth, there was someone who came from nothing and built themselves from the ground up. This is where hard work also implies the possibility of living a successful life. Success arrives because of passion, when people find themselves passionate about a topic, they devote themselves to providing a service and/or good to the world. We have the CEO of Google, Sundar Pichai, as an example, who grew up poor and

whose father attempted to provide his children with a good education. Sundar had an interest in technology at an early age, and by attending an ivy league school through scholarships, he has now brought the world an everyday resource, Google. In other words, both genetics and hard work have always been a determining factor in success and regardless of which one fate has provided us, success can only be determined by yourself.

In the aspect of animals, specifically thoroughbreds, I believe that genetics and hard work also play a role in their success. Focusing on the racing aspect, the thoroughbreds' purpose is to race and win. Throughout my years in the industry, I have met breeders who strongly believe that genetics is an important aspect of having a winning horse. Just like humans, socioeconomics provides a greater advantage, and the same is implied with thoroughbreds, the greater the Grade or stud fee from the sire or dam, the greater advantage in receiving an athletic and sound horse. When responsibly bred, a colt sired by Authentic would have a greater possibility of becoming a great racehorse than a colt sired by a horse who is part of claiming races.

However, I have seen owners purchase horses for over \$43,000 and have ended up in \$6,500 claiming races in Arlington, winning only 2-3 claiming races. This is where hard work is implied by their success. I am a strong believer that any horse regardless of pedigree has the possibility of becoming a graded stakes winner. A horse must have a "heart" to race, they must enjoy what they do, and be passionate about it as well. Many believe that external factors like vitamins and enhancers can dramatically boost horses' stamina and the possibility of winning, however, that is not always the case. It may provide short-term stamina, however, there would not be a drastic change overnight. I have seen horses who look forward to exercising in the mornings and having the grit to challenge other horses when striding over the track. I have also seen a 20/1 odd horse win an allowance race, where multiple underdogs have won the race and

not the horse who was specifically built for that certain terrain, distance, and speed. That being said, pedigree may provide you a greater advantage in being successful, however, hard work can be the determiner in having a successful life. In other words, hard work complimented with a passion to achieve your goal creates a greater possibility of success rather than only having good genetics.

In conclusion, when I think of success, I believe that it revolves around being happy and living your life to its fullest. My mindset has been, if I was on my death bed, would I leave with regret or joy that I have lived a happy life, following my passion, excluding socioeconomic status and wealth.