

Essay on The Advantages and The Disadvantages of Being Popular

Mat and I are good friends. We sit next to each other in class. He is a good-looking person who is popular with others in the class. In fact, he is popular with everyone in the school.

You could say that Mat has the kind of charisma and flamboyance that makes everyone look at him wherever he goes. He reminds me of "The Lone Ranger" who never ceases to get attention. The only thing he does not have is a mask and a white stallion. I am more like "Tonto" the sidekick who stays in the background.

Being popular has many advantages. Everybody knows Mat. He is a perfect, house captain, the school's soccer captain and our sprint star. He excels in everything he does except his studies where he is merely fair. Nevertheless, he barely manages and I help him whenever I can.

The school children like him a lot as a prefect because he is very fair to everyone. He never bullies or takes advantage of anyone. So his popularity is well-maintained. As the school's soccer captain he gets tremendous applause whenever he enters the playing field to lead the school team against an opponent. He has the flair and ability to score goals and last year we were the state champions. A huge part of the credit is due to him. In the 100 m and 200 m sprints, he reigns supreme. No one has yet come close to beating him. He runs with ease and confidence. He already holds the state records for these two events.

Thus it is easy to see why he is so popular. He is able, there is no doubt about that. Together with his amiable and happy-go-lucky attitude, everyone has grown to like him. So he gets fan letters now

and then. Some girls are so infatuated with him that they send him love-notes and sweets. The teachers are so pleased with him that he gets special attention in every subject. The canteen man is so proud of him that Mat occasionally gets some free titbits and drinks.

As for me, I am just his friend, I can see the advantages a popular person has. As we are good friends, get to share some of the advantages. Blushing girls smile at us, or rather him, as we walk by, i get extra attention from the teachers too, because I sit next to Mat. I sort of get some glory reflected off him whenever he is in the limelight I must admit it is fun to be popular.

However, I never.r imagine that popularity has its disadvantages until Mat failed his end-of-year exam last year. Many things changed because of that.

Now, everybody knows that Mat has failed. The news spread like wildfire to each and every corner of the school. School children start to look at Mat in a way that I have not seen before. It is as though that Mat has suddenly, fallen from grace. In fact, he has. People now stare at him with not-so-pleasant looks.. The teachers chastise him for slackening in his studies. His soccer skills suffer and from the way things are turning out I doubt he can defend his sprint titles successfully this year.

Mat asks me why people can behave so differently all of a sudden. I tell him that I do not really know. Maybe people expected too much of him. Since he did not perform to their expectations, they lost faith in him.

Mat understands one thing very clearly now. Anybody who is well-known must suffer the consequences when things do not go well for him. He realizes now why. Pop Stars hire bodyguards to protect themselves

from the very fans who admire them so. Popularity turns into prison very quickly. A popular person is trapped by his own popularity. Everybody sees him, judges him and expects him to perform to expectations all the time. When he shines they applaud loudly. When he fades, they laugh at him. There is much truth in the saying that "when you laugh, the. the whole world laughs with you; when you cry, you cry alone."

Well, Mat is not actually alone in his moment of despair. am still his friend. Some of us still are. He is very thankful for that and he says so. He admits that popularity has its advantages and disadvantages. He cannot avoid it. He can only enjoy the advantages and bear the disadvantages as best as he can. Knowing Mat. I know that is exactly what he will do.