
Model Discussion Text: Should Homework Be Banned in Schools?

Introduction

Homework has always been a part of school life. Teachers give it to help students practise what they have learned in class, and many parents believe it builds discipline and responsibility. However, some people argue that homework causes unnecessary stress and takes away time for rest, hobbies, and family. Because there are strong arguments on both sides, it is important to consider whether homework should continue to be a regular part of school education.

Annotation:

- **Purpose:** Introduces the topic, provides background, and outlines both sides.
 - **Techniques:**
 - Neutral opening statement sets the scene.
 - Use of “*some people argue...*” signals discussion structure.
 - Present tense and formal tone throughout.
 - **Key Sentence Function:** Last sentence poses the central issue — “whether homework should continue...”
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Arguments For Homework

Many teachers and parents believe that homework is an essential part of learning. It gives students the opportunity to revise lessons, practise new skills, and prepare for upcoming topics. For example, when students complete maths exercises at home, they strengthen their understanding of formulas and problem-solving techniques. Homework also teaches time management and self-discipline, skills that are important for success in adulthood. Furthermore, completing tasks independently helps students take responsibility for their own learning instead of depending entirely on teachers. Supporters of homework argue that it connects school and home, showing parents what their children are learning and how they can help.

Annotation:

- **Paragraph Function:** Presents arguments *for* homework.
- **Language Features:**
 - **Examples and evidence:** “For example, when students complete maths exercises...”
 - **Abstract nouns:** “discipline”, “responsibility”, “success”

- **Formal tone:** No personal pronouns (“I”, “you”).
 - **Effect:** Builds a logical, rational case for keeping homework.
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Arguments Against Homework

On the other hand, many students and child psychologists argue that too much homework can do more harm than good. They believe it creates unnecessary pressure and reduces time for relaxation and family connection. After spending six hours at school, students often feel exhausted and need rest, not more academic work. In addition, heavy homework loads can affect physical health by reducing sleep and increasing stress. Some studies suggest that too much homework does not always lead to better grades. Critics also argue that homework widens the gap between students, as some have access to quiet study spaces and parental support, while others do not. For these reasons, opponents believe that learning should happen mainly at school, where all students have equal opportunities.

● Annotation:

- **Paragraph Function:** Presents arguments *against* homework.
 - **Language Features:**
 - **Connectives:** “On the other hand”, “In addition”, “For these reasons”.
 - **Modal verbs:** “can”, “may”, “should”.
 - **Evidence type:** Research-based reasoning (“Some studies suggest...”).
 - **Empathy tone:** Focuses on students’ wellbeing and fairness.
 - **Effect:** Shifts tone from logic to emotion and equity.
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Conclusion

Overall, there are clear advantages and disadvantages to giving students homework. It can strengthen academic skills and teach responsibility, but it can also cause stress and reduce personal time. A balanced approach may be the best solution. Schools could set a reasonable limit, such as thirty minutes of homework per night, and focus on meaningful tasks instead of repetition. This way, students can continue learning outside school while maintaining a healthy balance between study and rest.

● Annotation:

- **Paragraph Function:** Draws together both sides and provides a fair solution.
- **Language Features:**
 - **Balanced phrases:** “advantages and disadvantages”, “healthy balance”

- **Suggestion:** “A balanced approach may be the best solution.”
- **Modal verbs:** “may”, “could”
- **Tone:** Diplomatic, reflective, mature.
- **Effect:** Shows reasoned judgment rather than emotional bias.

Structure Breakdown

Section	Function	Example	Teaching Note
Introduction	Introduces issue and both sides	“Teachers give it to help students practise...”	Neutral overview, no personal pronouns
Arguments For	Presents logical benefits	“Homework helps students take responsibility...”	Facts and examples, logical tone
Arguments Against	Presents counterarguments	“Homework can cause unnecessary pressure...”	Evidence, empathy, fairness
Conclusion	Summarises and suggests balance	“Schools could set a reasonable limit...”	Proposes a solution, mature tone

Language Focus

Feature	Example	Purpose
Connectives	“However”, “In addition”, “On the other hand”	Link arguments smoothly
Modal Verbs	“can”, “may”, “should”, “could”	Express possibility or recommendation
Abstract Nouns	“discipline”, “responsibility”, “pressure”, “balance”	Formal tone, academic precision
Balanced Expressions	“advantages and disadvantages”	Shows fairness and reason
Formal Tone	Avoids “I think” / “you should”	Makes writing sound objective

 **Comprehension Questions**

Understanding the Text

1. What issue does this discussion explore?

2. List three arguments *for* homework.

3. List three arguments *against* homework.

4. What solution does the writer propose in the conclusion?

5. Does the writer completely support one side? Why or why not?

Language and Structure

6. Identify three connectives used to link ideas.

7. Find one modal verb in the text and explain how it changes the meaning.

8. How does the writer maintain a formal and objective tone?

9. Why does the writer use both logical and emotional appeals?

10. What effect does the phrase “a balanced approach may be the best solution” have on the reader?

Critical Thinking

11. Which argument do you personally find stronger — for or against? Why?

12. How could this discussion change if written from a student’s perspective instead of a teacher’s?

13. What might happen if all schools completely banned homework?

14. How could homework be redesigned to be more enjoyable and purposeful?

15. Suggest one other education-related topic that would work well for a discussion (e.g., “Should schools start later in the morning?”).

 **Mini Writing Extension**

Prompt:

Write your own discussion paragraph responding to:
“Should students have to wear school uniforms?”

Scaffold:

1. Start with a topic sentence introducing the issue.

2. Present one argument *for*.

3. Present one argument *against*.

4. End with a balanced or suggested conclusion.
