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## Discursive Writing: Learning to Plan

### Learning Intention

To learn how to plan a discursive text by exploring different sides of an idea before writing.

### Success Criteria

By the end of these activities, you will be able to:

- Break down a question into its **idea**, **skill**, and **requirement**.
- Write a clear **main idea** that shows your opinion but allows for other viewpoints.
- Plan each paragraph carefully with examples and tone.
- Organise your ideas so they flow clearly from one to another.

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### Activity 1: Why Plan Before You Write?

#### Read:

Good writers plan before they write. Planning helps you to:

- Keep your ideas on track.
- Make sure your writing sounds balanced and fair.
- Stop repeating the same points.
- Write more confidently and clearly.

#### Question:

Why might planning make writing easier for you?

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#### Activity 4: Planning the Paragraphs

Use this planner before writing.

Paragraph	Purpose	Key Idea	Example / Evidence	Tone / Voice
1	Introduction – show the main idea			
2	Explore one side (Yes, kids should)			
3	Explore the other side (No, kids shouldn't)			
4	Conclusion – share a thoughtful opinion			

#### Activity 5: Teacher Model Plan

**Question:** *Should kids have chores at home?*

Paragraph	Purpose	Key Idea	Example / Evidence	Tone / Voice
1	Introduce the idea	Chores can teach kids to be helpful and responsible.	Helping with dishes or cleaning their room builds good habits.	Friendly, calm
2	Explore one side	Chores teach teamwork and make kids feel proud.	Working together helps families stay organised.	Positive, warm
3	Explore the other side	Too many chores can take time away from homework or rest.	Kids need free time to play, relax, and be creative.	Understanding, balanced
4	Reflect and conclude	A few chores are good as long as kids have time for fun too.	Balance helps kids learn and stay happy.	Thoughtful, fair

## Activity 6: Plan Your Own

**Question:** *Should kids have school uniforms?*

Now it's your turn to plan your own discursive response.

Think carefully about what you *believe*, but remember — in discursive writing, we **explore both sides** before sharing a final opinion.

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### Step 1: Brainstorm

Think about both sides of the question.

Yes, kids should have uniforms because... No, kids shouldn't have uniforms because...

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Questions to help you think:

- Do uniforms help students feel equal?
  - Can wearing uniforms save time in the morning?
  - Do uniforms stop students from showing their style?
  - Do they make everyone look the same when they are all different?
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### Step 2: Plan Your Paragraphs

Now use your brainstorm to fill in the table below. Try to make each paragraph explore a **different idea** about uniforms.

Paragraph	Purpose	Key Idea	Example / Evidence	Tone / Voice
1	<b>Introduction</b> – introduce the question and your main idea			
2	<b>Perspective 1</b> – reasons kids <i>should</i> have uniforms			
3	<b>Perspective 2</b> – reasons kids <i>should not</i> have uniforms			
4	<b>Conclusion</b> – share your final, balanced opinion			

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 **Step 3: Add Details to Your Plan**

Think about these questions as you fill out your table:

- What examples can I use from my own life or people I know?

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- What emotions or values are connected to this issue (e.g. fairness, comfort, belonging)?

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- What tone should I use — serious, thoughtful, light-hearted, or friendly?

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- How can I show I understand both sides before sharing my final view?

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## Example Starters for Each Paragraph

Here are some sentence starters to help you plan your writing:

- **Introduction:**  
“The question of whether kids should have school uniforms is often debated.”  
“Some people believe uniforms make school fairer, while others think they take away personal choice.”
  - **Perspective 1 (Yes):**  
“One reason students should wear uniforms is that they help everyone feel equal.”  
“Uniforms make mornings easier because students don’t have to decide what to wear.”
  - **Perspective 2 (No):**  
“On the other hand, some people think uniforms stop students from expressing who they are.”  
“Uniforms can be uncomfortable, especially in hot weather.”
  - **Conclusion:**  
“In the end, school uniforms can be a good idea when they are fair and comfortable for everyone.”  
“Perhaps the best solution is to let schools have relaxed uniforms that balance comfort and pride.”
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## Extension Challenge: Strengthen Your Plan

Once you’ve completed your plan, make it stronger by adding more *connections*, *transitions*, and *depth of thinking*.

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## Step 1: Add Transition Words

Transition words help your writing flow. Try using at least **one from each group** below:

### **Adding ideas:**

also, in addition, another reason, not only that

### **Showing contrast:**

however, on the other hand, although, while some people think

### **Showing cause and effect:**

because, therefore, as a result, this means that

### **Summarising or concluding:**

overall, in conclusion, finally, in the end

Write a few transition words you will use:

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### Step 2: Add Reflection Sentences

Discursive writing isn't just about giving facts — it's about showing your *thinking*. After each paragraph, add a short reflection sentence.

#### Examples:

- “This shows that rules can be helpful, but they must also be fair.”
- “Maybe it’s not about the clothes at all, but about how students feel at school.”
- “It can be hard to find a balance between freedom and equality.”

Write one reflection sentence for your conclusion here:

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### Step 3: Read Your Plan Aloud

Once you've finished planning:

1. Read your plan aloud to check if it sounds **smooth and balanced**.
2. Ask yourself:
  - “Did I explore both sides?”
  - “Does my plan sound fair and thoughtful?”
  - “Do I know what my final message will be?”

Write your final reflection here:

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