

What Makes a Good Balanced Argument?

It needs:

- an introduction;
- opposing views of for and against;
- supporting evidence;
- a concluding paragraph that includes the writer's own opinion; to be interestingly written.

It should have:

- a mixture of causal conjunctions and adverbials.

It has to be:

- written in the third person (except final paragraph);
- written using formal and technical language.

Useful language:

Useful Words and Phrases

Causal/contrasting conjunctions and adverbials

Here are some useful words and phrases to help you write your argument

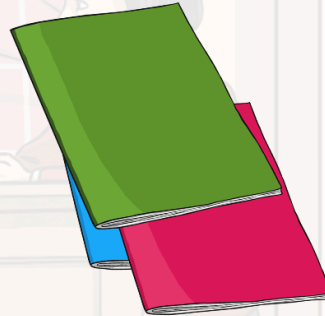
| | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Firstly | Secondly | On the one hand | As a result | Because |
| Consequently | Due to | For this reason | Hence | Thus |
| In consequence | In order to | In this way | Otherwise | An outcome of |
| Since | So that | Subsequently | Therefore | Although |
| Though | Even though | While | On the other hand | However |
| Despite this | Nevertheless | Otherwise | On balance | In conclusion |

Example of a written balanced argument:

Should Homework Be Banned?

Anyone who has ever been to school knows what it is like to be sent home with piles of homework. For years, teachers have been setting extra maths, spellings and other assignments to be completed outside of regular lesson times. But with the increasing pressures of modern day life, there is a growing call for homework to be banned. Here are some of the arguments for and against.

Many people see homework as an important part of school life; almost like an extension of the lesson. If the teacher cannot fit everything that is needed to be taught into the lesson, then being able to set homework is essential. This way, pupils can continue the learning at home, which in turn helps their understanding and knowledge of the subject. In fact, recent research shows a positive link between the amount children do for homework and their achievement levels.



Should Homework Be Banned?

On the other hand, aren't children entitled to a break from learning? After spending all day at school, a few hours 'downtime' spent watching television, playing computer games or exercising outside is essential for a healthy, fun-loving child. In fact, the government's own health guidelines recommend people aged between 5-18 should exercise for *at least* 60 minutes a day. Where are children going to fit that in if they are busy doing homework every evening?

While there are a lot of people that understand that argument, the fact remains that children go to school to be educated and many parents welcome the chance to support their child's education at home. Practising spelling or helping their child read gives parents the opportunity to play a part in their child's learning. It also gives them a clearer understanding of how their child is progressing. Similarly, a lot of children enjoy doing homework with their parents. Why introduce a blanket ban if some children and parents actually enjoy it?



Should Homework Be Banned?

The flip side of the argument is that many parents feel overwhelmed with the amount of homework their child brings home. With so many after school activities and clubs on offer, they feel there isn't enough time to fit everything in. Furthermore, due to ever-increasing government expectations, parents sometimes feel unable to help their child as the work is too hard or on a subject matter they are not familiar with.

In conclusion, there are many strong arguments for and against banning homework from schools. If it helps a child's education, then surely homework is a good thing. Then again, time away from studying to play is also incredibly important to a child's wellbeing. On balance, I don't believe homework should be banned because it really is an important part of learning. However, I also believe there should still be time in the day for fun! Therefore, perhaps schools should come up with a compromise: keep homework, but don't set so much!

Writing the Argument

Once you have written the introduction to the argument, you then have to write about the different points.

Use your for and against plan to help organise your writing. After the introduction, start a new paragraph with a 'for' argument. Remember to write in the third person and to use formal language.

On the next paragraph, write an opposing view from the 'against' column of your plan.

Continue this way until you have argued all your points in an equal, balanced way.

Then, it's time for the final paragraph...



Final Paragraph

The final paragraph is a bit different. It concludes the argument and includes your own opinion. It is written in the first person (I). Here is the final paragraph in the example.

In conclusion, there are many strong arguments for and against banning homework from schools. If it helps a child's education, then surely homework is a good thing. Then again, time away from studying to play is also incredibly important to a child's wellbeing. On balance, **I don't believe homework should be banned** because it really is an important part of learning. However, **I** also believe there should still be time in the day for fun! Therefore, perhaps schools should come up with a compromise: keep homework, but don't set so much!

Concluding
the argument

Your
opinion

First
person

Now write the
final paragraph
for your
argument.